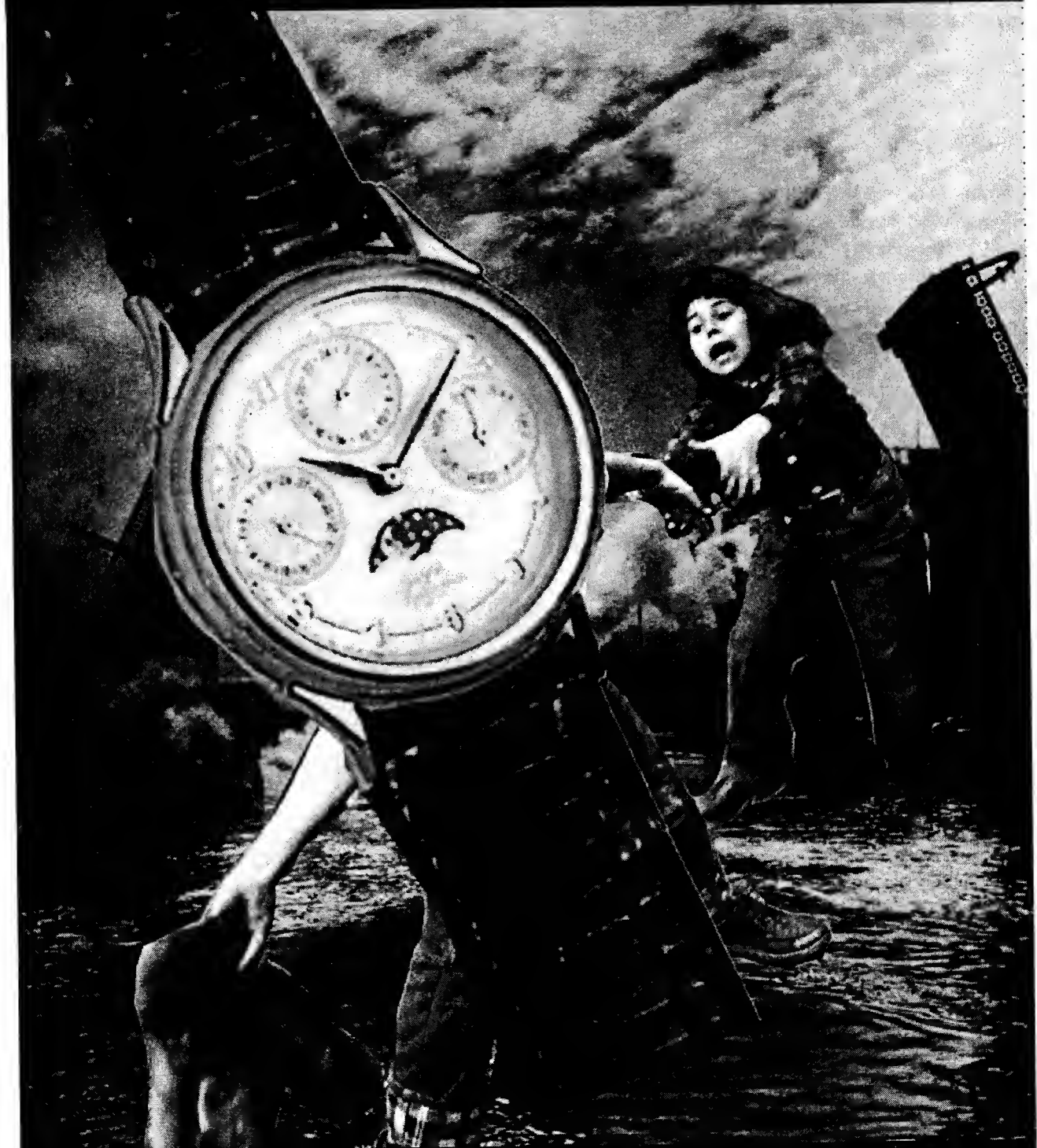


AGAINST SLEEP



AND NIGHTMARE #6

Against Sleep And Nightmare

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Background

ASAN #6 –Now at a rate of far less than one per year. This issue of ASAN has been somewhat delayed by my efforts to synchronize my interest in certain fields with my mastery of them. I'm not finished yet. Revolutionary time does not flow in linear fashion anyway. I address the question of fundamentally changing our conditions of living at a time when a vast structure works to conceal this question's existence. The magazine has had a reasonable success considering this. I am part of a small, informal tendency sharing basically the same perspective (see web for addresses). We encourage others with similar views to contact us.

But ASAN is still a one-person magazine. All the text in the magazine was written by me, although I've taken ideas from various collaborators. This comes mainly from differences in the energies of our small group. Almost everyone today is drawn in so many different direction by the ruling specialties of work, rent and consumption that we find it hard to coordinate even two or three people's activities.

ASAN could be seen as part of a debate on strategy among a very small group of revolutionaries. Within this milieu, there are those who call themselves "ultra-leftist," "council communist," "autonomist," "situationist-influenced," "class-war anarchist," or "left-communist." This magazine is a kind of model or experiment. It is intended as an example of the kind of activity, analysis and intervention revolutionaries might soon do on a larger level. Naturally, some of the experiments have worked better than others. More-so, these experiment depend on the still uncertain state of total class struggle. I do hope to inspire people to figure out how things work and act, rather than repeating formulas and following. To that end, all articles are original and written specifically for this issue. I would challenge other publishers to become something less of reprint mills.

ASAN is just as much written for anyone. As our present way of living becomes more and more impossible, the question of how we can create another way of living becomes more important but harder

to address. This society has turned it's crisis against those who would oppose it.

Despite some big words, the ASAN is meant to be a simple-as-possible view of how our side fares in the class war. We are not writing for any specialized group. We are not treating everyone equally out of guilt. Escaping elitist language is a way of harnessing the power of full human intelligence. And there simply is no elite today worthy of the name and any real change today will happen without such an elite.

ASAN's esthetics is a strategy. We combine theory and practice, the specialized and the general to point to the larger communist method. But we do not have any interest in artistic/esthetic ventures that seek to dissolve specialization while retaining capitalist/market relations.

I often use "we" in the magazine to refer to a larger group of sympathizers, because the magazine is intended to represent a political tendency rather than my personality, and because using "I" over and over again starts to sound grating.

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Please do contact me if you like the spirit of this zine. Email is the most effective way. In the past, I have not always replied to letters in a timely manner. This was because of the weaknesses of my practice and not from any Situationist-inspired refusal to communicate. Hopefully, this has now changed, the magazine can become biannual and so on. We shall see.

Everything Is True And Nothing Is Permitted!

THE TERROR NETWORK

Today's publicity machine is gorged on its own falsehoods. Like a drunken gambler, each successful distortion and spectacular event only spurs it to greater absurdity. Beginning in the last summers of the 90's, the media showed us some large explosions with only the barest rational explanation and with numerous people dying in them. The 747 that exploded over the Atlantic in the summer of 96 was only the start of this drama. The bombing of the American embassies in Africa a murderous preamble. You could almost draw a line of increasing provocation from the Waco massacre to the bombing of Kosova. And undeclared war on Iraq still continues.

These spectacles are ironically intended to show that this world does not intend to change. "Terrorists today do not have to announce their aims or even their existence to achieve their goals" babbles one illustrious expert quoted in all the papers. "How do you fight a terrorist who has no demands?" responds last year's movie poster. Obviously whoever is producing the various explosions must feel well served by the publicity machine since they have not issued any correction to the media's story.

This terrorism is at the vanguard of the unexplainable and unmentionable. Whenever there has been a stop to the explosions, it has only been to focus attention on equally absurd trials around accused bombers. But the trial of Timothy McVeigh and the Lockerbie bombing trial somehow neither showed the logistical support nor the larger motives for whatever horror was on display.

The most advanced tendencies of this society are writ large in this terrorism — especially the advanced state of decay of

human relations. We can see how the bombing of the Oklahoma Federal Building and the American Embassies in Africa shared tremendous structural similarities. In Nairobi, Kenya, massive numbers of bystanders were butchered without a single serious US government decision-maker being touched and it is worth noting that one of the confessed Kenya bombers is a former Marine sergeant now has taken partial credit. In

subject. And naturally, having some idea of its own final direction, one imagines that this system instinctively projects the urge to absolute, irrational destruction onto its opponents. Thus the definition of terrorism today is elastic enough to allow the window breaking of "Eugene Anarchists" to qualify while excluding the murderous rampages of the LAPD Rampart Division.

Dictators and "freedom fighters" are



Oklahoma, all ATF officials were absent on the day of the bombing. And the retaliation attack after the African bombing was rehearsal for the further punishment bombing against Iraq and Serbia.

All official explanations of the current terror system trail off into indecipherable fine-print. If a supposed terrorist is caught, as in the Oklahoma City bombing, their trial is first postponed into the dim and unmentionable future and is then based on off-hand comments made to neighbors. Their execution seals all further information available on the

conjured into the public spot-light one month only to vanish within another couple months. The thugs of the Kosovo Liberation Front being only the latest in a series of "good guys" who are naturally interchangeable with the "bad guys" of other such gangs.

If reality today is different from *Wag The Dog*, it is primarily in terms of things being more boring and incompetent. Each ruler has so much in common with each other ruler that elaborate stunts aren't necessary *except against the peasants*. Hollywood tricks

DEFINITIONS

Activism: militancy; The *ideology* of activity or organization for its own sake. The **activist** would moralistically argue that it's better to go on a march that will change nothing than to stay home and consider social reality. In the manner of the religious fanatic, the **militant** (syn) use constant activity as a way of repressing an awareness of their total social condition. "Sure you may have a theory about us never changing the system but at least we do something."

Can be a variety of *leftism*. Activist ideologists tend to spread the despairing counter-part ideology of *inactivism* - which equate any active intervention with militancy "Any sort of political action just inhibits people's autonomy and makes real change harder. Doing nothing is better."

Atomize: Originally, the atom was considered the smallest unit that matter could divided up into. Market-place society **atomizes** people by dividing them into purely separate, comparable units. When people circulated from city to city or country to country merely to earn enough to survive, they are atomized strangers.

Capitalism: The present world system, that started with the European colonialization of the Americas and has expanded its reach to the entire world and every part of life. It is based on wage labor, exchange, and commodity production on a world scale. This system included the so-called Communist Bloc when it still existed.

Commodity: A product, anything bought and sold. A person's labor time can be bought by a capitalist and so their creative power becomes a commodity like sliced bread.

Communism: Not the system that once existed in Russia. A social system where human desires will replace exchange and profit as the moving force in society. Communism will be based on people directly controlling their creative activity.

Deficit: The difference between what the American government collects in taxes and what the government spends in various evil programs. *Used by politicians* to demand that workers give up wages, jobs and houses to appease their guilt. See also *Myth*

Democracy: Any system where the majority shapes the decisions that the government makes. see *Permanent*

justify the absurdity of the entire enterprise of this life. This world wants to be judged not on its qualities but on its enemies (to paraphrase Guy Debord). The system of the big lie is the model for any large industrial project today (see "The Realm Of Quality").

The fake wars – the war on drugs, on AIDS, on crime, on terrorism – these wars reinforce the true wars that happen from time to time, in Kosovo, Iraq, or some other concealed location.

American terrorism follows the same recipe as the terrorism secretly organized by the French or Italian states. The only addition of the American state has been to locate the nexus of terrorist aspirations within some ill-specified Middle-Eastern nation – but recently even this has changed.

In "Operation Gladio", a program whose existence was publicly admitted by the Italian state a few years ago, the Italian secret services, with NATO and the CIA organized "left-wing and right-wing terrorism" to distract awareness from growing social unrest centered in series of wildcat strikes.¹

By casting any dissent as utterly barbaric, France and Italy achieved an otherwise unattainable nirvana of cooperation from the population. Now it is natural that the level of cooperation will now used to sell anything – terrorist threat breakfast cereal.

Any objection to the terror which justifies the organization of things today has retreated into the substratum of the unmentionable. This is the same place where our awareness of the poverty of life lies today. The misery of daily life has the same hidden quality as a sexual taboo.

THE SPECTACLES' FRAGILE PERFECTION

From where does today's terrorism flow? Terrorism is an integral product of this world's **fragile perfection**. What does a "faceless terrorist," an efficient manager of a far Eastern Internet startup, the Congo's utterly corrupt Mobutu or a touchy-feely leader of a 12-step program have in common?

They each fully take part in the senseless sensibility and sensible senselessness that is the modern order. Mobutu organized the corrupt, senseless pillaging of an entire country for the immediate goal of money. A more modern manager makes money more sensibly but sees that money vanish within the higher senselessness of international currency and stock speculation. Certainly, every manager today agrees that the stock market must be maintained. Beyond this, every manager today takes an active part in the *free-market of lies*. The glory and purpose of this market is to assure that each lie supports both the stock market and every other lie.

All institutions come closer to merging into generic bureaucracy. Today the Bush administration uses "PC" race quotas to fill cabinet posts while promising further ruthless attacks on the poor.

These generic bureaucrats flow in the stream of images that we are calling the spectacle. They each turn the wheel of publicity with a reasonable faith that the whole ball of lies will turn around and give them profits on each of their turfs.

The unity of the spectacle and the world market occurs at the point of circulation. Each moment where life is falsified by someone selling their life to buy back their survival is a moment that is turned to the advantage of today's rulers. Today's advertising often boils down to the question "would you rather die of boredom or starvation?". The giant and deadly lies of today – terrorism, the drug-war, AIDS, and national liberation – all rest on a series of seemingly harmless falsifications. Each moment that taste is controlled by advertising,

are unnecessary because Washington has always been Hollywood anyway.

Like any of the big lies of capitalism, the absurdity of exploding buildings and airplanes, of wars appearing and disappearing out of nowhere, serves to

¹ See Operation Gladio, David Guyatt, 1997, Available online

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thought is moved by mediocrity, and each moment a bored person toils to bring *Diamond Jim* profits, is a moment where a person's intentions are turned against them.

For the owners, the quite-reasonable principle is that once people accept an over-all absurd organization of life, they will just as easily accept the absurd scams sold by each particular entrepreneur. And vice-versa.

One of the principles of Norbert Wiener's old *cybernetics* is that every chunk of information is equal to every other chunk of information. While nearly forgotten within the modern babble of "computer science," this principle is more and more put into practice by the operation of the market.

Within spectacular circulation, any piece of official nonsense has the same legitimacy as any other words produced by experts. Moreover, the primary activity of the vast mass of generic bureaucrats is the simple rewriting and fusion of existing documents into further new documents having neither more interest nor more information. College textbooks recycle news stories which recycle scientists press conferences and government press releases. News article cobble together corporate press releases written by scientists paid to make the companies look good. Experiments based on twins share equal space in *Time* with the empty homilies of *Dear Abby* clones.

In one particular absurd incident, former US Cabinet official Pierre Salinger certainly looked silly for having

picked-up an Internet document of uncertain origin and then claimed that it proved the downing of flight 800 was a US military conspiracy. But what does it really mean that Pierre Salinger's "secret document" had been on the Internet for months? Only that NBC feeds more selectively from the trough of press releases than do Internet sources.

The rise of the Internet thus has only automated the existing *spectacular packet-switching* system. The net allows



the automatic flow of a mishmash of rumor, observation, statistics, innuendo, and half-truth. This reduces the money paid to scientists, journalists and government workers for producing it.

But the Internet is not necessarily the most sophisticated version of spectacular

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"spin-doctoring." The old media forms are quite happy to look more reasonable by denouncing this less sophisticated form of rehashing old news.

PROVOCATION AND CRISIS

Crisis as a permanent institution was well illustrated when the four-year long stage-managed Starr investigation – then known as the "Whitewater Crisis" – itself had a crisis. A few years before the

end, Kenneth Starr actually got tired of the job and announced his retirement to a comfy college presidency. But enough pressure was then exerted on Starr to allow this institution to weather its own temporary crisis and go on to its seamy, steamy finish.

Managed crisis is the alchemy that this entire system is set on brewing today. It is a two-edged sword that is wielded more and more often. The basic rule is "*crisis control always becomes normal control.*" Indeed, this is the most reliable motor of change today.

Crisis is critical for today's system of apolitical politics. When all activities are organized around the current panic, any talk of the larger situation must be abandoned. In America only snatches of right-wing rhetoric survive to constitute America's "political dialogue".

For example, whether the Afghan groups currently blamed for the bombings of the US Embassies in Africa are now rogue or merely seem rogue, is irrelevant for the general circulation of panic and control. These armed groups were initially setup by the

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CIA in its effort to attack Russian influence in Afghanistan. While this information was openly stated in the US press at that time, through the spectacle's mix-master memory, such information can now be treated as dubious and subversive.

The paradigm of terror has taught today's managers the secret of being "proactive." It is not merely the broadcast media that has become a "seamless stream of images." Real events merge into the theater of crisis which is also the theater of total submission to inscrutable necessity – this is the "propaganda by the deed" of the forces of order.

Terrorists are one of the natural carriers of pure crisis. Like Nazis and child molesters, they constitute a reason to abandon all reason – a hot button that must be pressed at an ever quickening pace.

And the terrorist cell itself is the distillation of panic, irrationalism and sexual repression. So the evolution of terrorism from Marxist-Leninist to Christian and Moslem merely follows the general movement of the managed repression of urges.

Just as terrorist tactics are the ideal justification of state power, the terrorist cell is the ideal method of generic state organization. The terrorist cell can be infiltrated much more easily than it can be smashed. So police have naturally learned the methods of utilizing the action demanded by a group for their own purposes.

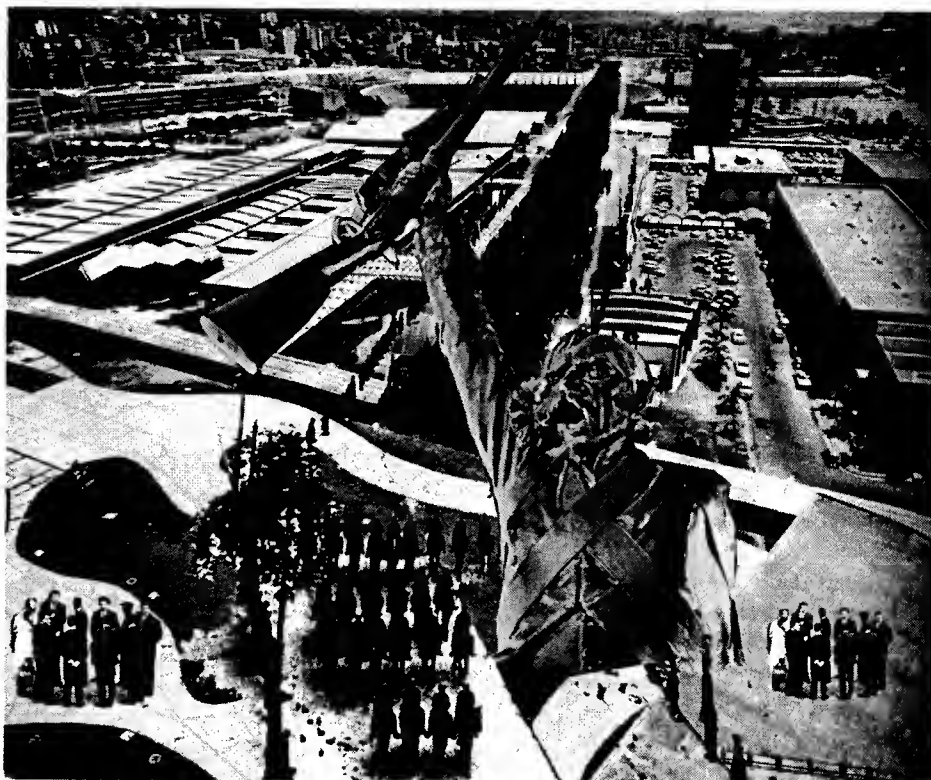
The terrorist cell moreover is the most modern addition to bureaucratic society. Terrorism is more than just a product of the bureaucracy. It is an ideal form of the most advanced bureaucracy.

The state wishes to impart the Frankensteinian autonomy of the terrorist cell to all of its parts. The "Year 2000 problem" was treated as a world-wide fire drill, demonstrating capitalism's preparations for any hypothetical collapse. In the US, each institution is expected to achieve some short term autonomy, demonstrating capitalism's superior preparation for abstract crisis (still, this doesn't prove

capital's ability to confront a mobilized proletariat).

BUREAUCRACY

And so what exactly do we mean by bureaucracy? Schools, offices, factories, courts and prisons are today more and more interchangeable social factories – different variations on the human machine. Max Weber documented the progression of bureaucracy as the automation of authority. All those qualities of authority which might have been invested in either tradition or individual personalities can be invested in the possessor of the role of boss,



manager and so-on. The cloth of authority makes the man.

Bureaucracy itself is the natural corollary of wage labor. The buying and selling of human labor power implies that a society's rulers must have the means to process people like cogs and process people into cogs.

Just as much as this society is fully capitalist, it is fully bureaucratic. Everyday, we see instances where just the sweep of a pen gives someone qualities of power and desirability that people none the less think of as innate.

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Everything is for sale and those in power are interchangeable bureaucrats. The bureaucrat's power comes from the entire power machine rather than any extraordinary ability they might have. Movie stars' claims of unique personalities or powerful presence are so many publicity stunts and well practiced routines.

Bureaucracy is certainly an old story (and has been for at least a hundred years). But all of the dispersed resistance to modern life has served as proof that bureaucracy *by itself* has neither been able to stop rebellion nor fully control its

crises. From the sixties to the nineties longer or shorter explosions of spontaneous mass power have wracked this society.

SENDERO LUMINOSO

As a leftist outfit operating in the harshest possible condition, the Peruvian Maoist group "Sendero Luminoso" had to discover new methods of organizing what is essentially progressive capitalism against the massively corrupt forces of backward Peruvian Latifundian capitalism.

(Definitions-continued)

War, Permanent Elections.

Detourn (de tōrn): v. [situationists Fr *detour*, change of direction (fig) evasion, trick] to arrange disparate elements of the dominant culture together to form a new work, esp. in a way that reveals the true meaning and function of the original elements. Detournment as revolutionary activity reverses the systematic fragmentation of specialists - *n.-ement* (-mā) the act of detouring

Exchange: giving something of equal value in return for someone giving you an object. The more this sort of apparently simple act dominates the world, the more each person is a purely atomized unit and the more community cannot exist.

Ideology: The thought of power - ideas in the service of power. Ideology is frozen thought but not all frozen thoughts are ideology. The *ideologist* develops *empty rhetoric* whose real appeal is to a person's unstated (and often unconscious) interest in maintaining their immediate material conditions - their part in capitalism. When a subjectivist ideologist says "all that matters is immediate pleasure," their rhetoric might be appealing to a student because it would justify their vapid, parasitic existence. "Everyone's got to work, it's only fair" might make those forced to work 60 hour weeks feel slightly better.

The Left: The left wing of capitalism. Historically, those involved in the political system who wished to move closer to "socialism." As the political system has become more of a conveyor belt for the capitalist system, leftists have become *spokespeople for the most bureaucratic forms of capitalism*. Leftist have in mind the interests of welfare workers, teachers, prison reformer and professional "facilitators." Leftists range from liberal who want a government that takes care of people better to Leninist of various stripes who still imagine the recreation of a soviet-style welfare-state dictatorship.

Morality: See *The Revolutionary Unconscious this issue and Against Capital And Morality, ASAN #5*,

Myth: a magical story is used to give meaning to the

through innovative "parallel" forms of organization.

At it's height, Sendero controlled a sizeable portion of the Peruvian countryside on both a village-by-village basis and in their own armed camps. When Sendero took control of a village, they created two things. One thing was a visible government apparatus - a mayor, vice-mayor, village council, etc. The other thing was a secret committee which directed the actions of everyone in the open government - few in the village were allowed to know the identity of this committee, but its decisions were backed by the threat of other Sendero forces in camps in the hills.

This parallel system made it hard for government forces from Lima to root-out Sendero control from villages. This system is also an ideal, simplified picture of the most modern form of bureaucracy, which could well be called *postmodern bureaucracy*.

Classical bureaucracy is based on a strict hierarchy. Postmodern bureaucracy is based on small teams from above organizing appearances and terrorizing the standard order. But this swirl is generated to increase production and decrease dissent. Order and chaos flow into each other for the benefit of order. The elite further fortify themselves by using invisible agents as catalysts for those changes they desire. At the same time, survival is no longer guaranteed nor is the meaning of any order certain. The reformers, the intelligence services, the media, and the outside investors each appear suddenly to provide a sudden extra meaning to something that previously seemed certain.

Spectacular diseases, energy shortages, social welfare cuts, sudden wars, depressions or company takeovers are described as if they are acts of nature. Naturally, while many of these involve capitalism's absurd production system, capital also amplifies a general chaos within people's efforts to order their lives.

To give one rough example, the

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original meaning of the Social Security fund was that it would be safe. This original safety meant the government had the obligation to make the fund safe. But now safety means Social Security having enough for everyone in fifty years. So this means that this fund must be gambled on the stock market to earn enough for everyone. But, of course this whole line of reasoning is simply a shell game around various funds controlled by the government.

But this "multiplicity of meanings" only demands a greater conservatism. Each worker is coached to serve many masters. Each of us is expected to hold many jobs and plan and pay now for all future stages in our submission to the order of exchange. TV news tells college or high school students to consider themselves already workers, home owners, parents, retirees and invalids. Each point of escape is sealed off. Pay now for career training, health insurance, auto insurance and retirement and burial costs - soon it will be required (but this insurance still won't guarantee protection from anything).

Reform is constant now that no part of the system can be questioned ("The good news is that you can find out about electrical rate reform here!"). The form of the postmodern bureaucracy is the vacant center. When a real power is willing to manipulate the direction of panic, incompetence, and ignorance, this power must remain obscure. Not only does power today remain hidden, its immediate agenda remains just as much hidden.

The modern corporation is a fusion of the corporation of the 50's and the Manson family. The "cults" of the 70's and beyond were an expression of the moment when the liberated fragments of human existence could be resold back to the highest bidder.

A fragmented self - a total commitment to lies, to absurdity or to cruelty - is the most valuable quality of a manager today. The highest points the spectacle engenders are moments when it engenders a passionate commitment to an acronym, a product or a TV show.

(Definition-continued)

lives of people in a culture. The story of Adam and Eve was a Christian myth. "Anyone can work their way to the top," "America was founded on traditional values," "We have to work twice as hard to pay off the deficit" are modern American myths. Myths dominate people when they are alienated from their lives by wage labor.

The Nation: a mythical community supposedly consisting of "people living in the same general location, speaking the same language and having the same general culture." This myth was used to create capitalist governments by the national entrepreneurs of first the US and France and then every region of the developing capitalist world. Since there is no part of the entire world with a homogeneous culture, nationalist ideology is really used to unify people against those who are different. America was founded on murdering native peoples and continues to base itself on racism.

Oppression: Being persecuted or subjugated by an unjust force. All specialist of power focus on the unfairness of particular oppressions without admitting the total misery of this society. The manipulators of the most conservative talk of "crime," high middle-class taxes, and inflation. The left talks of racism, sexism, homophobia and classism. But all the specializing of misery makes it harder to understand the total misery of this society.

Privilege: A special immunity, right, or benefit enjoyed by an individual. This society grants a vast array of apparent privileges; home-ownership, whiteness, American Express Membership, maleness, or citizenship. But every "carrot" is only a chance to participate more in the economy or to avoid the social terror of today. Virtually no one gets *real privilege* from being a part of this society.

Right: As capital has carved new social relations, the powers that people had kept by using these informal groups has disappeared into formal rights ostensibly granted by a higher power. As the market economy is perfected, rights become simply an abstract form of private property.

Role: an interchangeable act that is offered for each person to take up at any given circumstance but is

marketing of fragments of human existence is a natural conclusion to the marketing of everything needed to live.

The flip side of this is that human existence is always at play in all of these possibilities. The Internet is full of the strange schemes of uprooted individuals. These schemes have the same ambiguous quality of weapon or illusion that every contested arena has today.

THE EYES OF MORDOR

In Tolkien's *Lord Of The Rings*, the Dark Lord possesses unassailable power but can only direct that power to the point which attracts his attention. Power today approaches this level of fragile omnipotence.

The success of a hacker like *Kevin Poulsen* or *Kevin Mitnick* is based on the absolute apathy that permeates all levels of this society. Mitnick was known for stealing secrets merely by finding the right person and impersonating someone who deserved information. As the order of things becomes more impersonal, the average person feels less and less real desire to enforce society's rules. Even mid-level bureaucrats sleep-walk through their jobs. And sleep-walkers are not good gate keepers.

While the powers-that-be try to counter this with an ever-accelerating array of direct policing and suppression of knowledge, this still leaves an incredible realm of possibilities in between the visible categories of this society.

Modern social machinery is hated consciously or unconsciously by such a large percentage of people that it can only be protected by systems of counter-attack, whirlpools of fear and manipulation. Indeed, the *hacker* plays a similar role to the terrorist – decoy, enemy, cat's paw and excuse.

The imperfection of this control is generally tolerable, often desirable, to the system. At best, today's absurdity functions through a self-justifying randomness: *don't be at the wrong place*

at the wrong time. Altogether, this randomness works as a scheme implicating each person in both crime and enforcement at different levels. Thus chaos is ever-present but absolute refusal only appears at special times.

It has been documented how in the 80's, the Los Angeles court system explicitly cultivated a group of criminals who were permitted to literally get away with murder, specifically so that they would always be on the court's leash. This group of felons was always available to come up with testimony damaging to the cases of those targeted by the police. (we say "documented" because the court system on a larger, more "fair" level is just as much a snitch factory – with the more explicit "quid pro quos" just being a natural temptation).

Through computers, the law is gaining more and more resources to place folks within the realm of judicial control. But this is not a linear increase in repression. The spectacle classifies more and more parts of social life within the illegal sector.

Much of adolescent social life revolves around illegal drugs. Most suburban social life happens in indoor malls which explicitly do not grant the "right" to free expression or free association. Here everything is illegal once the owners of the space tell you to stop.

The randomness and the game of control is encapsulated in the good cop/bad cop dialogue that permeates every part of this society. The constant presence of soft cop social workers in the lives of adolescents can be seen in the fusion of hip phrases and clinical vocabularies.

While the liberals and the left are no match for the right as a social force in America, both left and right have made important contributions to today's ideology of repression – the left appearing to demand more social workers while right demands more police.

Feminists have joined with right wing ideologists to use genetic testing as a way of forcing fathers to pay for a

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mother's welfare. And both right and left have pushed an ideology of enforced community as the answer to modern society's alienation. "Weed and seed" = "stick and carrot."

In the conservative, "bad cop" version of reality, all those who are convicted of the smallest crimes are tortured in prison – but that would leave too few workers to keep society going. The law has sufficient records to place a good percentage of the entire population in jail. In the liberal, "good cop" version of reality, each person would be rehabilitated from each of their sins by their own social worker (more radical liberals even go to length of demonstrating for each person's right to rehabilitation – which is also protecting rehabilitation jobs).

These lies fuse to create the (real) racket version of reality. The uncertainty of each person's position is used to intimidate them into a submission to every scheme of this society. "Legal limbo" is very calculated. Everyone winds-up subject to many flavors of threat, harassment and conformity.

The courts cry crocodile tears about "inefficiency," yet this serves the powers-that-be perfectly, more perfectly even through it having come about by accident. The "break-up of the American family" is often blamed for the present judicial invasion of daily life. While we want no part of the nuclear family, we know the police state takes part in the break-down of human rapport even more so than the nuclear family.

What really happens is that just the need to survive puts a large number of people in "legal limbo." This limbo ranges from being in jail, to being on the streets but always subject to arrest to being out but always needing to "watch your back," to being on the street and force-administered "mind healing" drugs.

Moreover, when a person is in this limbo, one duty they have is as cat's-paws to lure more people into the rackets. Each DUI convict is strongly pressured to join the ideology of Alcoholic Anonymous – and thus to pull more "users" in with them. Homeless

people who "get off the street" by gaining employment within the homeless service provider apparatus need to mouth the recovery jargon derived from AA. Each convict is pushed to testify against another to lessen their sentence. And the lyme disease hypochondriac feels pressure to evangelize more victims.

OBSCURITY AS METHOD AND CASTE

Obscurity is the leading edge of capitalism. The churning of social life becomes the organization of conformity through accelerating lies and accelerating atomization.

Obscurity as a system is spread equally through every layer of society, from corporations which hide their hierarchy from their own minions to an ambiguous, all-encompassing illegality that those on the bottom use to survive.

This is the spectacle's most modern form, which is reproduced in all systems of administration. Behind whatever tawdry story is coming from the White House, the Senate or the papers in a given week, confusion and incompetence as methods are visible as the marching orders.

This twilight world meshes perfectly with bureaucracy and capitalism because the "ideal" of equal protection is kept. Every dollar of a bribe is approximately equal to every other dollar.

The world of police records, credit records and security systems is a caste system by default, by a "happy accident." In theory, someone without much money, without insurance, credit, a driver's license and so forth could function without breaking the law. But in reality, they can't. The chaos of capitalism makes it both impossible and absurd for the majority to do so.

VERONICA JONES

In Philadelphia, in early 1996, Miss Veronica Jones was arrested in open court in retaliation for her refusal to put forward the prosecution's version of its case against the well-known framed leftist journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Jones was arrested on an "open warrant." It seems that she had been charged with writing bad checks two

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years previously in New Jersey. However, the judicial machinery had made no particular effort to find her up until the point of Abu Jamal's hearing.

This situation is the situation of many, many poor people and people of color. From warrants to parole violations, court-ordered 12-step programs, restraining orders, Child Protective Services regulations, psychiatric interventions, and welfare regulations, there are an uncountable number of control systems arrayed around the lives of the poor.

Modern bureaucratic society has enough absurd complexity that a large percentage of people have a certain number of various "strikes" against them. But class, race and the strategies of capital's bureaucrats together determine whether these strikes will be fatal or ignored.

An "open warrant" can sit for year if a person does not attract the attention of the authorities. It is only one part of the obscure judicial bureaucracy that many people can thankfully ignore only as long as they either fail to attract the attention of authorities or if they kiss the asses of said authorities.

PEOPLE'S PARK

We can see how the expansion of the present order makes repression the only real new product. The world of judicial repression also creates a new terrain of struggle, one in which our side is still fighting for its voice. Certainly the attack on the justice system had much expression in the LA riots.

Another example is "People's Park" in Berkeley, California. People's Park is a hang-out of the unemployed, social drop-outs and low level drug dealers. This group is at the center of an entire social vortex. This low-level drug economy is the center of the unsaid, the accumulation of outlawed activity everywhere in this society.

Telegraph Ave., in that same area, is patrolled by uniformed police, undercover police, roving "mental health counselors" and assorted other obscure human relations professionals. This repression laboratory points to a future

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where the normal citizen will at the same time have a job, be in school, and be under some kind of judicial sentence.

This less controlled area of Berkeley allows experiments where the role of cop, merchant and social worker grow closer together. And repression is sold directly: the police herd a noticeable number of the disturbed onto Telegraph Ave. to convince people how a firm hand is needed against these same disturbed.

The aura of Telegraph is "the weird", that which is different from "the real world." But each part of this world: factory, office, mall and bohemian hang-out, feeds off of the other. Telegraph is one of the main outlets for social contact for working and middle-class people for a twenty or fifty mile radius. It's the absolute zero of social interaction generally that makes Telegraph critical as a zone of social interaction and as a zone of managed contestation.

The hierarchy of social privilege enforced by the judicial system is the defining quality of the present real world. In People's Park, the regular police patrols stop various individuals whose terms of probation allow them to be searched arbitrarily or whose terms of probation prevent them from going to People's Park at all. This is similar to the order of Serbia, Bosnia or Kosova, where the police both make sure that different groups fight each other and make sure that everyone has different rights assigned to them.

As the arbitrary power of the police/social service sector expands, those at both the top and the bottom of society have more ways and more incentive to break the law. And this allows the authorities to exercise wider arbitrary power over those who can be justly arrested for their violations.

This power is naturally unleashed whenever the planners issue a new order: In the summer of 91, when the University Of California was installing a volley ball court in People's Park, *police arrested several people for breaking the*

(Definitions-continued)

expected to be discarded just as easily. When we are at the mall, we must be consumers, at a cafe we be intellectuals. At work, we are expected to be happy

Recuperate:(re cu'pär at) v. [situationist Fr *recuperer* to retrieve] to put spontaneous or revolutionary elements back into the language of the dominant culture and thereby trivialize them and negate their creative or revolutionary power - **Coopt, n. -ation** (a-shun) the act of recuperating.

Specialist: one who studies, works with, and by extension tries to *own* any single category of knowledge; **an expert.** A biologist is a specialist on animals. A manager is a specialist at giving people orders. A political consultant is a specialist at manipulating the passive opinions of voters. Ralph Nader is a specialist on consumer rights. Ronald Reagan, *the great communicator*, was considered an expert at communicating the orders of the government to the population.

As this society reduces life to a machine-like order, its rulers become bureaucrats/specialists who operate interchangeably in the corporate, governmental or university bureaucracies. *All specialists become specialists in ideology.* The ruling bureaucrats thus generically manipulate people, information, and rhetoric according to the economy's orders. A logging company president becomes the California State Universities president and then could conceivably become a politician. Jerry Brown began as a Jesuit, became governor of California, then was the left-wing cameo presidential candidate and now is a radio talk-show host.

Specialize, Specialization:

Spectacle: (Spek tä kul) n. [situationist Fr *Spectacle* show, movie, play etc.] A fusion of form and appearance. A form of accumulation under late capitalism. See also "*How To Go Beyond The SI In Eight Simple Steps*" in *Against Sleep And Nightmare* #5. and "The Realm Of Quality," this issue.

Star: Any arbitrary focus of spectacular attention.

The System: A vague term that became popular in the sixties and seventies. The know-it-alls of today attack this vagueness because the vague can still be useful. It's true that talking about the system makes it harder to blame any one person or group. But the term system speaks to the instinctive feeling people have that all the apparently unrelated parts of this society form a single whole.

Big talkers of one sort or another naturally attack the idea that TV stars, politicians, corporate managers, college professors and the big talkers form a single, invisible class of ruling experts.

Terrorism: The use of bombs, armed attacks, fear and secret cells to wage *conventional warfare* against an existing state. Terrorist ideology always winds up using the methods of the capitalist state; the specialization of power and a population that is kept passive spectators. And the terrorist group generally aims to recreate a new capitalist state on the basis of "national liberation." (see nationalism)

Union: An organization that acts as a broker between labor and capital. Thus, any organization organized to explicitly accept the conditions of this society while ostensibly demanding more. It is no surprise that

rules during a ball game. (Breaking the rules of the volley ball game disrupted the intentions of the civic planners. At that time, they planned to improve the quality of the park by expelling homeless people and attracting athletic yuppies. Later, these same volleyball courts were removed due to their failure as a tool of social reconstruction).

In earlier issues of this zine, we talked often of the symbiotic relationship between suburb and city for constructing shopping-mall social peace.

When the geography of outlying areas has been altered, the context of Berkeley and of any "college town" also changes. The semi-official permission given for

weirdness justifies the highly sophisticate repression that constitutes "Berzerkeley."

The police more and more hold the electrodes for these experiments. The churning quality of the modern urban area softens people up for repression.

Certainly, the authorities tolerate the various milieus partly because they have to and partly because these milieus serve as something of a laboratory to see how well the control systems work. The informal milieu is at the knife's edge of the possibilities of world change. Certainly, the fact that critical people are getting together by itself guarantees nothing. This group must decide to act.

(Definitions-continued)

unions act against the working class.

Wage labor: when a person sells their activity for money. This seemingly simple operation is the basis of our society's power, growth and decay. One person paying another to work is an apparently simple relationship that hides how the workers' own power to create becomes something that confronts them as a commodity, something external, outside their control.

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Note: Marx, Mumford, and Nietzsche are important and widely available. The work by Richard Bandler and John Grinder together constitute the basic texts of NLP.

On one hand, capital's world is incredibly fragile. The LA riots showed how much this dreary world is held together only by people's inability to simultaneously think of an alternative. On the other hand, this informal opposition must systematically oppose the system, otherwise it merely winds up as an experiment in discovery what and how much is tolerable: "direct democracy", "self expression," or

"community empowerment" have all been given a part within capital's final frontier; the self-policing society.

TV SMASH

An encounter during a "TV smash" is instructive. Several park regulars, mostly white, are loading television onto the stage in People's Park. They are accosted by a black, City-of-Berkeley-paid "caretaker." He claims to have a mandate for authority from the city and "the activists" and mentions the name of a long-time activist. He especially notes that while the university "is bad," the city has been working with the activists and "now everyone is together on this."

The various folks there wind up confused and paralyzed by this little speech until a certain communist militant asks the caretaker what he will do if his authority is broken. He mentions calling the police and thus is exposed for what interests he really serves. It should be noted that this fellow's speech had the quality of a bit of freeze-dried ideology dreamed up by a committee and most-likely dished at a "park sensitivity" workshop given for Berkeley City social workers (social cops). It should be noted that the activist mentioned by the caretaker had no connection with these Berkeley City schemes: her name was merely picked out as part of the illusion of participation.

Since we live in the world of conspiracy/anti-conspiracy theory, we should note that within this scenario, there is no absolute difference between the open activities of social service agencies and the hidden, "conspiratorial" activities of the police.

The supposedly benign activities of the social service agency essentially involve the perspective of treating a group of people as patients to be cured of their ills - "mainstreaming," giving people "the choice to enter normal life" (as if this society ever offers any other choice). The difference between a paid agency representative and the cop who secretly attends a meeting is then only a matter of degrees and public relations. This social

worker is just as likely to take any communication as a tool to be used for control.

Note here that various freeze-dried ideologies are fragile and can disintegrate when challenged in even a small way. This incoherence within this society means there are often situations where a single challenge can become widespread mayhem.

CLOUD TRACING

It is useful to trace the smallest breaks in the world exchange system. But the actual level of working class combativity is often invisible in similarly organized spectacular pseudo-events. The many apparent conflicts you see are certainly important but what they mean for any more fundamental challenge to this system must be balanced against the continuing of *capital's normal life*. Each point where a person submits to work, school or mall life is a real if invisible event. And many people fight invisibly against the order of things as well. Class struggle is constant because people constantly resist work and commodities. But to become a movement, this resistance must gain coherence.

When we actually see explosions of real activity, it often has little to do with the usual headline. It means many invisible refusals have come together. Just as much, explosions do not follow any fixed pattern. Rather than being gradually building movements, most threats to the present system have come from sudden explosions of hope and anger (May 68 in France, the LA riots, the unknown revolution in Kurdistan, the riots in the US after the assassination of Martin Luther King, and more that are less known).

Even a more definable movement like the Seattle 2000 WTO protests had their impact because of the unexpected factors involved - the black bloc and especially the impoverished youths who joined the black bloc looting. And the movement of assaulting large gatherings of capitalists just as much is likely to dwindle if it allow itself to fight in playing field that is set by capital.

The Realm Of Quality

Narrative:

At eight o'clock this morning, while you are driving to work; the Dow Jones Industrial Average drops precipitously, silver mining and photography stocks are particularly hard hit. At ten o'clock, while you are at a meeting, Kodak Corp. raises the price of film three hundred percent to make up losses. At three O'clock, your bosses' boss at the Lazy Days Portrait Studio Inc. walks in and demands across the board staff cuts to make up for added costs. At five O'clock, as you are leaving work your bosses tells you to take at least a week off...

"Jim Noriss' first novel "Our Fondest Dreams" will soon be published by Random House". Jim flows in a vast river of literary entrepreneurship.

Since college he undoubtedly has been working to get any sort of writing into recognized publications. He fights to combine his own vision with the official vision of this world.

One image rests on another image which altogether rest on the stream of images. Today's metaphors

built on clichés show the mechanism of social construction that an aspiring author must become part of. The cliché today is the foundation of a whole system of attention channeling – cliché are images, arguments, and attitudes that are remembered in bunches. So attaching a product to a cliché gives the product automatic name recognition. For that

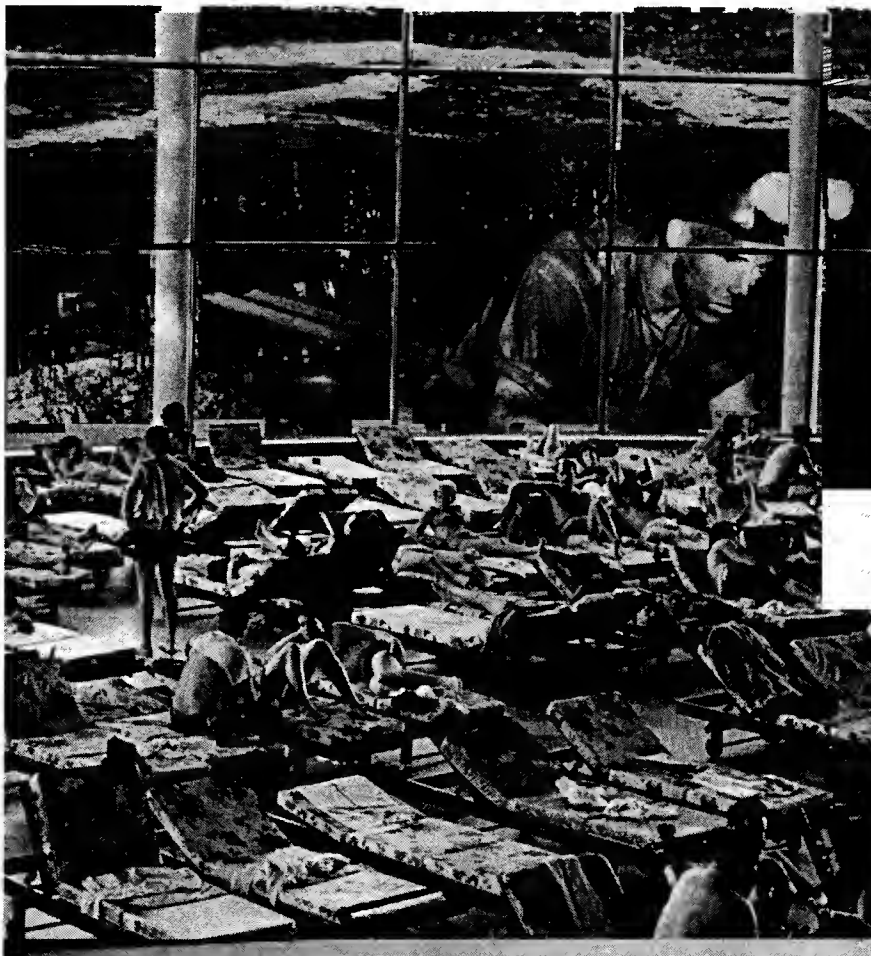
reason, clichés themselves have great value and being able to create them is valuable in itself: this becomes the last art form of capitalism.

Human relations

Common portraits of this society, from both its friends and its most extreme foes, focus on technology and economics as external objects. In one common way of describing things, technology and

development of this society is that it has transformed people, people's experience of themselves, and the way that they relate to themselves. This constant self-transformation produces a shifting ground. Everything in the past is now interpreted in light of the present. Just as Star Trek's space aliens today always speak English, the modern imagination projects the world as it is now onto all possible previous existences.

We have to do better. We must see that the system of today is a transformation of both people and things. Certainly this society presents itself as an immense accumulation of things. But the task for all of us is to translate this image of a pile of junk back into a series of ways that people relate to each other. Despite TV images of cars driving themselves or computers reaching out to people, the entire techno-structure, the entire



economics are simply neutral means of getting things done. With the opposite common description, technology or economics are incomprehensible forces, appearing out of nowhere, and unquestionably controlling human actions.

Neither of these frameworks is helpful for us. An important point of the

economic structure and the entire media structure are altogether the result of a continuous process of planning, maintenance, trouble-shooting and crisis management. In other words, it is a product of labor. And of it also all depends on the fragile resources of the planet.

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This then, is what we mean when we describe the present system, capitalism, as a human-relation.

Defining The Spectacle

Karl Marx described how, in the transition to capitalism, the process of exchanging goods for money for goods (G-M-G) became the process of exchanging money for goods for money (M-G-M) and reflected a qualitative change in social relations.

The peasant sold grain to get some money and then get back some goods. Money only mattered as one part of how his rural existence continued.

The capitalist starts out with money, buys stuff, then sells it for more money – money is what matters. The capitalist can even short-circuit the whole process and just earn interest on his or her money. The capitalist was different, not because he used money but because his ultimate goal was just more money. The money was not a means to support a large or small land hold, it was an end, something that would grow indefinitely.

The change that happened when capitalism became dominant reflected upon everything that happened within this new society – when money existed to recreate itself, it was able to move to occupy the dominant position that it presently has. This created the broad framework of today: the world where everything is for sale. (An immediate result of the dominance

of this circuit of money was the rise of factories where proletarians toiled as dispossessed pure sellers of labor.)

The dislocation caused by capitalism has allowed the world of images to take a similar sort of false freedom. The spectacle reflects a refinement of how images and representations relate to the

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course, the ruling class never sells or controls everything. But quantitative increase in the level of marketing results in a qualitative change in the relationship of people to their representations. Culture becomes TV: a river of slickly produced junk.

Previously, people created a culture that in the balance belonged to them, even if there were many parts created by particular specialists. Even those representations that were externally manufactured had to make reference to this culture. Today, the spectacle more and more refers to an area autonomous from the masses where the most important representations lie. In this reversal, even self-originated ideas have to make reference to this stream of representations. Television becomes an important topic of conversation.

The Situationist International formulated a concept of the spectacle. We will be describing the development of the spectacle as a parallel system to the accumulation of capital. For the Situationist, the spectacle was the sum of all looking, and all representation. In the pre-spectacular world,

lies were balanced by enough of common understanding that they could be unambiguously called lies. In the spectacle, all apparent authenticity on the level of surface in this sense is a false statement about the conditions of today.

This isn't just a matter of an image being a reflection another image. Just as



capitalist domination of life.

In an idealized "early capitalist" situation, there is only wage work that does not directly impinge the "culture" of workers. In most "advanced" conditions, capitalists directly markets the largest parts of the wage laborers' culture. From sports to ideas to trends, everything is on the auction block. Of

every commodity has basic use value, every image has some sort of relation to non-reflexive reality. A web site must publicize itself with TV advertisements etc., average people can have some real relationship with newscasters, etc. Provisionally, we might say life becomes *spectacular* when the balance of the social value flowing from images tips in favor of this self-referentiality over the representation of the concrete.

Capital is a system that traps the flow of human creative energy. Living labor is turned into dead labor – capital. And this is turned against the interests of the laborer.

By the same logic, the spectacle is a system that colonizes the social relations. As a whole, thoughts and social relations go from being immediate results of authentic relations to being controlled by the logic of the flow of images.

Images simultaneously are commodities and capital at the level of monetary relations. Capital is essentially quantitative. It is measurable as a mass of investment (though this measurement is limited by uncertainties of investment price and the general secrecy around trade, etc.).

The spectacle, on the other hand, is a phenomenon of subjective experience. The labor of ideologists and specialists in communication is united by a vast variety of links. The color and design themes that link the major appliances built in a particular year are dictated by the obscure Color Marketing Group (see <http://www.colormarketing.org/>, overshadowing the former American Color Council). Newspapers are linked together through their rewriting of the same news wires and press releases. The links are limitless.

The tenuous quality of these links forces each spectacular laborer to redouble their efforts to maintain their position within the entire flow of the spectacle. This same tenuous quality makes it impossible for us to totally map the spectacle. But the crucial thing is dominance of the spectacle as a whole. It is impossible to determine how

spectacular the latest movie is compared to say a punk rock show.

The main thing is the effort and incentive of the many specialist to enlist themselves in this very palpable “seamless stream of image.”

Naturally, the spectacle did not spring full-formed as a kind of new parasite on society but is an evolution of the realms of culture of dead labor and no culture – no organic unity.

Arguments about the exact point of initiation of the society of the spectacle misses the point in the same way arguments about the exact point of origin of capitalism. If some qualities of the spectacle can be applied “universally” to various realms of culture, it says no more than the partial applicability of market logic to pre-economic societies. Anyway, while television, shopping malls, and the Internet are only symptoms of the condition of life today, they still pretty well distinguish 1999 from 1799.

The Spectacle In Production

One of the main systems of capitalist management theory is “TQM” – Total Quality Management. TQM is doctrine which exhorts each company to find a niche where the sale of its unique “quality” can bring it profits.

This doctrine represents more than a single scheme to make a buck. It represents one common effort of capital to turn back a crisis of profitability. The one immediately obvious crisis of profitability comes from the inability of those companies which make “generic” products to make a profit. “Generic products” are those which anyone can make and sell. In world where a massive market system moves money with utmost rapidity, companies that sell something that many other companies also make and sell quickly lose their ability to obtain a profit since the selling price quickly goes down to the price of production (Of course, this is not the ultimate problem of capitalism but simply how the capitalist winds-up seeing it. For a more detailed

description, see Karl Marx, *Capital* v: I-III).

The alternative to this today is a series of angles, of scams. In the modern market, since production no longer consists of fixed commodities but of ever-varying gizmos of uncertain value, marketing must permeate the process to assure a market for whatever is produced – Internet start-ups are simply the latest within this racket.

Where did this begin? More than a hundred years ago, steam and coal gave capitalist society the means to conquer the globe purely quantitatively. Once it reached a quantitative mastery of the environment, the alteration of the *qualities* of environment became the key underlying project of capitalism. And within this, controlling the qualities of the world it builds has become key. And this increase in control has naturally happened *first obviously, then subtly*.

The most distinct aspects of the spectacle were first seen in the hypnotic power of mass communication – in radio, television and movies. And when these technologies first appeared, they had the appearance of separately acting forces. *The magic of Hollywood* involved prestige and glamour (words associated with magic). From Hitler to Saddam Hussein to Franklin Roosevelt, the power of centralized mass communication has reached its apex under all the varieties of *war capitalism*. Mass communication’s first wave is the harnessing of a scale of persuasion – from the “big screen,” to “big lie,” to “big stars.”

It is only by the further extension of the domination of exchange that the spectacle can be seen as an integrated aspect of alienated labor. In a previous issue, we described a view of the concept of spectacle which situated it as most focused on the process of consumption. The perspective of both Jean Barrot and those who view the Situationist International as being “media critics” is that the spectacle is only the experience of “consumers”, professional and skilled workers. It is viewed as merely a supplement to the consumption side of

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the production-consumption process. The framework of the spectacle as an accumulation of circulating appearances might seem similar to this, but ultimately it is more.

We will describe, instead, how the spectacle permeates many other aspects of capitalist relations: the entire circuit of production, consumption and reproduction are all reordered by this principle. Altogether the reign of the spectacle comes as capital's manipulation of the conditions of reproduction move from the obvious to the subtle, moving to conquer first the objective and then the subjective.

Capital does not just add advertising or packaging at the end of the assembly line. The assembly line itself is coated with a layer of "team spirit" ideology, the production process is packaged for the investor, the regulator and the competitor. A company that pretends to be efficient can be as ruthless to work for as a company that really does enforce efficiency. All activity is encapsulated within ideologies.

The spectacle reigns when the true and the false can coexist simply in the realm of the predictable. Lying about production and the production of lies are everywhere. Half of a company's revenues come from a gigantic factory while the other half may involve five people selling cocaine. As long as each has a statistically verifiable track record, each will be incorporated into a commodity.

This society is the product of the failure of each possibility for liberation, from the Paris Commune to the IWW of

1920's to the upheavals of the 1960's – but even without explicit revolts, even the smallest moments of ungovernability must be stepped on.

An electronic-parts store owner described the advance of electrical parts to ASAN: "Twenty years ago, if a ten cent diode went out in a radio, you could

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much as is practical. Once the manufacturer has the most savings out of production, things enter the second stage. In this stage, the manufacturer rearranges production so the ways he or she makes things brings the greatest profits and control, even though things aren't made more efficient. The product

is designed to break down more, so people will buy more. Spare parts are controlled more so the manufacturer will control the repair market. A thousand and one tricks are used.

Production Phases

We can trace three rough phases of capitalist production methods. Essentially, we move from traditional production to automated production to ideological production.

I. Traditional Industry: The small scale methods used to produce handicrafts. These advance but only in terms of individual activities. The single woodworker or iron worker would fit into this category.

II. Interchangeable Parts: automation and the scientific revolution - this begins with automation and larger scale production, most industry till recently fit into this broad category.

III Ideologized Production: The further

revolutionizing of the entire production process using psychology, cybernetics, systems theory, model and all ideological machinery of modern bureaucracy. The characteristic aspect is the "tweaking" one production process to influence over-all processes. The happens in the context of the increased unification of the spectacle.



just buy a replacement and keep the radio going. These days, all the electrical appliances have parts that are specially designed by the manufacturer and not available anywhere."

We can roughly describe capital as "revolutionizing" production in two different phases. In the first stage, interchangeable parts, automation and research are used to reduce the price as

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Goals of Ideologized production seldom are simply increases in production but rather are driven by a need to fine-tune the entire shape of production. Indeed ideologized production requires the basic framework of production to be set. In ideologized production, the shape of the product is changed to allow easy shipping, or to allow for an assembly line where union organizing is more difficult or for a thousand interlocked levels.

As capital evolves, each industry has evolved from one phase to the next. But different industries and processes are still at different levels. Steel is still mostly a simple commodity after three hundred years. Software now is produced massive ideology contained within.

The cybernetics of managing an enterprise is by no means a dry, rational, scientific matter but a blending of production management and the creation of ideologies for the unification of marketing, production and human-resource management.

Software tools that permit the combination of production control and flexibility still involve an inefficient customization of processes. Each corporate entity builds tools and techniques for similar purposes, yet none of these are compatible with each other. Different kinds of fasteners may or may fit different cars, different computers programs may or may not run on different computers. Indeed, the presence or lack of compatibility is part of production strategies.

Now each of the phases we've discussed follows from the last. For us, the transition from stage II to stage III is what matters most for understanding the society's present condition. Ideological production, then, is production once the immediate pay-off of transformation of the world has been reached.

Car production is a good example. Today's automobile has essentially the same arrangement as the automobile of 1950. Its tremendously greater

complexity has only marginally changed this. And the inside of a car has indeed become massively more complicated. But all the automated factories, computer chips and ultra-exact engineering has not made the car cost less and only moderately increased its gas mileage and left its durability about even.

Henry Ford's assembly line and improvements to it, reached the level of maximum efficiency in simple car production by the fifties. After that, small changes to the each part of this framework became key. The final, numerical output of production is now only one of many aspect which must be managed – the company's ability to deal with labor and suppliers is also a key factor.

Auto companies have looked in detail at what parts of production are most profitable to control directly and which are most profitable to control indirectly. They have added layers of "features," of accessories to the basic automobile. They manage the credit system which spurs people to buy new cars with money not yet earned and so-forth. All these changes tweaked the system. They assumed an assembly line would keep existing, that cars would have similar functions and so-forth.

As production efficiencies have reached diminishing returns except in a few key industries, managing production by controlling the price of parts, the level of fixed capital (parts and finished inventory), the price of repairs and the structure of the labor process are all key aspects which ideological-cybernetic management attempts to solve.

Final products now are assembled out of pieces which are crafted for their convenient indirect results. A part may cause planned obsolescence, a part may prevent generic replacement parts from being used, a part may assure that prices are different in different parts of the world. DVD "zones" show this baldly. Each DVD sold can be played with players from the zone coded on the disk – the only purpose for this is to prevent

people using movies made in different parts of the world.

The Up-Welling Of The Old

With the dominance of ideology, we see the immediate experiences of life today often involving more and more "technological misery" – the clearest horror being the longer and longer times spent on "support lines" either working for them or using them.

The transition to ideologized production is often, ironically, a freezing of the actual conditions of life. A computer programmer talked to ASAN about his efforts to automate the processes of Canadian tariffs. The regulations involved were far too complicated for modern trade. However, by using a computer, the authorities were able to automate these ancient regulations, thereby preserving into the indefinite future an otherwise unmanageable mess.

This pattern is repeated everywhere in the contemporary world – not only in terms of computer systems but in terms of all large-scale systems. Old things can be redesigned, stream-lined and marketed as new to the simultaneous delight of the market-place and the bureaucracy. And this casts the old in stone.

"Technology" as a generic is just one way of altering terrain. Ideology and mediation can be seen just as strongly in psychological or biological dynamics relating to the present society (see "The Medical Industrial Complex" and "The revolutionary unconscious"). And here too, ideology reproduces the archaic with its reactionary morality and moral panics.

While the spectacle is in the abstract a seamless stream of arbitrary images, its actual production is depressingly predictable. This is in the same way that television seems to promise you a chance to show you almost anything and winds-up showing you almost nothing. In this, the production and consumption are complimentary.

DEFEAT THE MEDICAL-JUDICIAL SYSTEM!

Today, a vast police apparatus is being put in place for the purpose of controlling, drugging and repressing the poor and disenfranchised.

From weapons searches for High School students to "anti-stalking laws" to anti-drunk driving laws to "stopping dead-beat dads" to "Involuntary Outpatient Commitment" (the forced drugging of those diagnosed as insane), all the different extensions of the judicial system aim at those who are socially least desirable. But it is becoming more and more obvious today that the "good reasons" offered by these "do-gooders" are just good excuses for an ever-widening ring of control and repression.

Children are being removed from homes of those Social Services deem unfit, then abused in foster care and finally given drugs to control their behavior. Those convicted of DUI are being sentenced to forced religious indoctrination in "12-step programs." Those with psychological distress are being forced to take psychologically damaging drugs. The behavior of those on the drugs is then used to justify even more police powers.

How many people know that Eric Harris, leader of the Columbine High School Massacre, was being prescribed the drug Luvox, a mania-inducing anti-depressant at the time of the massacre?¹

And the Columbine High School shooting is the excuse for more policing of kids, quite likely resulting in more children being drugged, more children given *speed* (Ritalin) and *speed-like anti-depressants* (Prozac and Luvox, etc.).

Police, courts, child-support, welfare services, psychological services, 12-step programs, drug-treatment programs, and medical services are coming together more and more into we could call the "*medical-judicial system*." In this process, the medical "solutions" they offer to social "problems" are making these problems worse - a viscous cycle this system intends ride to the point our entire society becomes an insane asylum.²

But the false intentions of these programs are becoming more and more obvious as these programs are used herd more and more people into a situation of being permanently controlled by probation, social workers, and psychiatric drugs. *But We can fight and stop this process.*

Some Tactics:

- **Resist forced drugging in mental hospitals, clinics, and outpatient care.**

This is happening in your community right now. We must understand that the forced administration of Haldol is the equivalent of lobotomy, not treatment. We must confront those who cooperate out of a "there's nothing I can do about it" mentality. Teachers, councilors and care-givers are vulnerable to social pressure. They often have some good intentions. Their job description does not say policeman on it.

- **Expose 12-step and "Anti-Drug" programs as tools of the courts and police. Denounce the fiction of these "voluntary" program which are mandatory as a result of police sentencing.**

12-step programs subvert the admirable goal of individual self-help by allowing courts to sentence people to participate in these programs. Moreover, the police-medical-social welfare bureaucracy is a very greedy "*higher power*" which today aspires, cajoles, and demands people "give over their lives" to it.

Rather than accepting the belief that giving-over power will do us any good, we must instead see that we, those at the bottom, those are yet under control, *we have a duty to take power over our lives*, power that we are seldom given today.

¹ "According to the manufacturer, Solvay, 4% of children and youth taking Luvox developed mania during short-term controlled clinical trials. Mania is a psychosis which can produce bizarre, grandiose, highly elaborated destructive plans..." (Source: <http://www.breggin.com/luvox.html>)

The use of various "speed-like" anti-depressants does not excuse a person for their actions. But when we look at the way that children are given drugs for their problems, these massacres only make more sense. When child are treated like so much trash, when their unhappiness is treated like a clock that needs to be wound tighter, then it is not hard to see how the resulting anger could combine with the "energizing" effect of Prozac/Luvox family drugs to induce murderous fits of rage.

² Right now, we are in Guy Debord called **Spectacular Capital** - we only say this society is "becoming" an insane asylum to show it is getting worse. In just the same way, the medical-judicial system is only new in the sense that several bureaucracies have grown into one mega-bureaucracy.

- **Show this is not about "Choices".**

It is important also to show that this is not a matter of "each person getting their choice." Like Jones Town, each person who happily steps up to get their poison koolaid is helping to force ten others into it³. Each person who repeats the lines about "meds are the only choice" "it's just a brain imbalance", etc., is strengthening involuntary drugging. Anyone who repeats "**more punishment for everything**" is strengthening the entire system. In the same way, the more we refuse to participate, denounce participation and make it hard on those who participate, the more power we will have.

This is not an issue that belongs to anyone. The state naturally targets those who are least desirable - whether women, minorities, children or men. And even more, it has often made the *representative* of women, African Americans, or other minorities into the enforcers of it's police measures. Feminist half-way houses can still push psychiatric drugs on women and steal women's children while attacking "patriarchy."

But really, we all are next, so we all have our own reasons to stop this. Many people must be anonymous in their resistance today for their own protection. Those who can afford to speak out should speak out.

- **Expose police intervention in family life**

The power of social services to take children is one of the most feared and hated powers of social service agencies. Like all the other powers of the bureaucracy, situations of terrible parenting etc., can be dragged out as examples. Reality is more complex. And the horrors of foster care and related complexes are seldom mentioned. We should approach family life realizing that social service soft-cops *don't have a right to be involved*.

- **Expose the lie of "biological determinism"**

Directly challenging the "big lies" of the system can an effect. Read Peter Breggin. Spread the word that many studies today announced using impressive statistics are essentially completely false. The claim that psychiatric drugs "correct a brain imbalance" is one of many outright lies supported by drug companies to selling their products⁴.

- **Show that direct resistance is a force that can STOP this**

From Police to drug companies to medical centers to social service organizations, there is an integrated business of repression and control. This can be resisted in many ways. *But Spreading the idea of resistance everywhere, is perhaps the most important tactic.*

Today, every toady of the system speaks as if they do are obvious and unquestioned. This comes because the combined money interests of police, drug companies and government weigh far more in commercial media than any human interests can or will.

Media won't change by itself. The exposure of radiation experiments on civilians has not stopped the system from speaking as if science was well-intentioned. The exposure CIA drug smuggling has not stopped the news speaking as if these "spies" are heroic. The shooting spreeds of people on pozac-like drugs has not stopped the legal drug pushers.

Direct resistance, resistance on the streets, can have an effect. The only way the system can **afford** to spy on the whole community is by getting us cooperate⁵. If enough poor people refuse to cooperate, we can sink the current expansion of the police system.

Police carry guns and wear bullet proof vests because they must act as an occupying force in the poorest neighborhoods. Social workers and psychologists don't have such weapons - at the very least, they can be attacked with rotten eggs. Even a measly attack like this can force some awareness of issues which the social cops only imagine that "everyone agrees on".

The system is vulnerable to our refusal. From refusing to accept the latest "genetic determination" to helping someone threatened with forced drugging, our refusal can make their system ungovernable. And every "well-intentioned" social worker, activist, half-way house worker or psychologist who cooperates with forced drugging, with monitoring the poor for the police, *should fear* exposure and further action.

While this system has been delegated tremendous police power, it still requires our participation for it's support. And we can withhold our participation, we can attack the weak links of this vast police and put it on the run. Indeed, the larger this system gets, the more vulnerable it is to serious **mass collective resistance**.

³ today the koolaid is "merely" drugged. But nothing stops it from being poisoned tomorrow. Already, social workers can kill a patient who complains about mind-destroying drugs by increasing their dosage.

⁴ The Best reference Refuting Biological Determinism: Peter Braggin MD, *Toxic Psychiatry*, published by St. Martin's Press.

⁵ Probation, outpatient treatment, half-way houses and so-on, aren't the system nicely letting a person not go to jail. They exist so the system can control more people, more cheaply.

THE MEDICAL-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

The Body Guards Of Lies

A look at Peter Duesberg's book *Inventing The AIDS Virus* shows the vast array of common interests that come into play in the process of protecting the obscure object of bureaucratic/ideological desire.

The uncontested and the most interesting part of Duesberg's book comes before he mentions AIDS directly at all. Here he describes the long history of official medicine falsifying the nature of many disease at many times. Despite these failings already being known, mainstream medicine has virtually the highest prestige of any section of the spectacle. David Ho's "pioneering research" that earned "Time Man Of The Year" has been quietly set aside in the years after was touted as the missing link proving the HIV hypothesis. Despite this or more like because of this, our ability to determine the exact cause

of the spectrum of conditions known as AIDS is quite limited. Duesberg and other "AIDS dissidents" (including the Internationalist Communist Group) give plausible arguments about this but, as we've said before, obscurity is a natural property of such large-scale phenomenon of bureaucratic society

Duesberg's book describes AIDS in detail as a product of the modern medical-bureaucratic agenda - with "genetic engineering" leading the way. The power of many of existing official lies comes as medicalization becomes a big part of all capitalist ideology (i.e. anything bad becomes "an addiction", etc).

Medicalization is strongly aided by the centralization of all scientific research today. The stamp of research on findings about AIDS, genetic links, drug addictions, psychiatric medication or other social-medical ideologies appears incontestable. By that very fact, some of these turn out to be the most patent lies

clearly has a part in the rising cancer rate. But research controlled by capital more and more orients itself to finding the genetic cause of all of these problems. Corporate feminists wonder what mysterious force destroys the confidence of teenage girls. While the spirit destroying qualities of school as such were well known to protesters in the 60's, today we need something more mysterious and encapsulatable.

Yet just as much, there are situations where we really don't know the answers. The facing leaflet addresses the psycho-pharmaceutical complex. From this leaflet, hopefully the complex social relations coming out of this are clear. Notice that similar discussions of the lie system might be made concerning AIDS, genetically engineered agriculture, antibiotics, Alzheimer's and elder care, legal and illegal addictive drugs, the prison and justice system and so-forth.



when viewed closely.

The magic of the modern spectacle comes from its hiding of a total perspective. *Anything can happen when no one knows what's happening in the next village.* The destruction of community and the falsification of daily life allows all other falsifications to take place. And we can judge the degree of media falsification by the degree of this falsification.

There are many parts of reality whose truth everyone knows but which one cannot prove in a laboratory: cops are jerks, work is unpleasant, stress can make you sick and so-on. Chemical pollution is ever-present today and

But each of these technical-control systems is also uncertain. We lean towards believing Duesberg's theory, yet in this and many other situations, our ability to definitively say what is happening is limited.

Hopefully, our discussion makes it clear that we're not personally attempting to resolve these riddles. One more series of speculations is hardly needed.

Rather than attempting to sort out each of the processes, our perspective is to find a framework that can deal with all of them. Rather than going into full detail, we will step back and give a framework unifying all of these

complexes, showing them as one of the general method with which this entire system is growing.

Follow The Money – Keynesianism Economic Background

The history of the last fifty years has been the history of constructing monumental false fronts. This society must produce more and more lies just to stay in the same place. The modern marketing system has to constantly stretch the “ladder of success” – moving each rung further from the last. While a good percentage of folks live on \$1000/month, professionals can make \$5,000/month and save nothing. Reproducing this ladder of success is critical part of the system. All commentators hail the advancing economy, as this economy crushes the average person surviving inside it.

Altogether, the big investments of the modern time have been based on “throwing bad money after bad.” The untenability of capital’s present phase will first be visible within capital’s desperate race to plug the both minor and major cracks in its image. During the boom of 1999-2000, the Dow Jones average was altered to exclude poorly performing stocks, such as Westinghouse, and add better performing stocks, such as Hewlett Packard (Of course, these changes ultimately didn’t stop the internet crash).

The racket of the military industrial complex was based on Keynesianism. Excess government spending soaked up the excess production of industry and pushed further consumption.

John Maynard Keynes had a simple answer to a simple problem. The problem capitalists had was that once they produced a huge amount of stuff in their factories, no one could really buy

much more and the whole of working, producing and consuming got harder to organize. Keynes’ answer was for the government to print money to buy all the extra stuff. *Artificial consumption is the key.*

Each era of capitalism has been characterized by the way it created this artificial consumption. The way that Keynesianism maintains production is to create an industry whose expansion



cannot be questioned. In the 50’s, 60’s and 70’s this was defense. In the eighties this was real estate. In the nineties, this is the medical industry. In the fifties, the military industrial complex was the locus of the “American Dream.”

The fifties model guaranteed survival within the exchange system for no longer living a rich, enjoyable life. To maintain the system of exchange, consumption would be guaranteed to increase as much as production, even if the consumption meant building planes and burying them in the desert. The military-industrial complex was financed by the government which printed and borrowed money for this purpose. The mix of “guns versus butter” was the boundary between the working class and the ruling class, in that workers traded off the insanity of nuclear blackmail for the promise that a certain number of mostly white, mostly male, “good” jobs would continue to exist.

The eighties and nineties model added lies and mis-direction to fifties model.

The idea of there being any alternative to life in America was simply ignored. The military industrial complex is growing more slowly but other scams have taken its place. The larger scams included the medical industry, real estate speculation and the police/prison industry. Since the system no longer has to guarantee survival, the idea of paying more and more just to survive an illness had a certain logic. The medical industry has grown at the rate of 10% per year for the last twenty years (this is adjusted for inflation!). This winds up with people paying more than seven times as much as they did twenty years ago.

Now all these models increase production more and more without the average person choosing to spend any money on them. Defense was and is directly government supported. The real estate boom was supported by the government ignoring investment scams and by corrupt diversions of Savings And Loan money to commercial Real Estate. The building of hospitals added further to this. Hospitals and prisons are perfect investments since their inmates have little choice about whether to leave.

Up to the present day, the medical industry is visibly supported by the government while being owned by corporations. This allows prices to increase indefinitely and pays a few of the ever-increasing bills for the poor. Beyond this, investors can see the obvious principle that a sick person has no choice but to pay whatever they have for medical treatment and patients are captive consumers, ready to be fleeced of everything. (at the same time, of course, a rhetoric of individualist consumerism is increased so as to prevent any sense of entitlement).

The general principle of Keynesianism has worked reasonably well for capital for at least seventy years. But there were sometimes a few problems, like money getting less valuable since so much gets printed and so-forth. Still most of the world has been

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running on various versions of this system for the last fifty years. The problem is that by producing so much stuff, the absurdity of Keynesianism often shows through.

Ronald Reagan officially abandoned Keynesianism when he was president. But this only perfected the most modern accounting system – which is Keynesianism fortified with lies. Supply-Side Economics advocated the same policies as Keynesianism, but had absurd assumptions and absurd conclusions but this falseness was its useful element. Indeed, whether the government formally balances its budget is mostly a matter of organizing appearances since so many “Para-government” institutions such as banks also serve to manage the economy by running deficits and surpluses. And the size of the budget or even the results of arithmetic, can altered by decree (though all these measures have a cost to them).

Rather than balancing the level of consumption with the level of exploitation, the modern system of *negative consumption* must constantly increase the level of deception, fear and anger. It sells more protection now that no longer promises survival. Hospital culture is one visible area where people must depend on inscrutable technology for their personal soundness.

Falsifying the value of money is the most powerful force today in this “new economy.” The most obvious example is that government “inflation figures” stay constant while the price for food, gasoline and housing increase wildly. Once their numbers are fudged, the government plans seem to workout perfectly – and exactly against the proletariat. From secret currency transactions to bank and government collusion to the falsification of Social Security figures to vast scams, money is pushed in and out of the economy wildly and for the benefit of the largest controllers.

The economy of this negative consumption is real – its need for lies is very concrete. Capitalism remains an economy based on exchange. Some entity must pay for all of the stuff that is

now produced. Scams have a limited life – often the life-cycle of a given scam is managed by the higher authorities. These same folks clean up after the BCCIs of the world.

The system requires that lies be spread in even, predictable layers. And this is not guaranteed. World capital lost about 30% of its value at the end of October of 97 as the balance different lies reached a less controlled level. But even 1998, capital has been able to reconstruct an image of prosperity. The final end is uncertain yet closer.

Medicine as Activity

All of these systems of consumption management are also ways in which this society defines people’s activity – they redefine survival, achievement and reproduction. The “American Dream” of forty years ago designated that an obedient working class would not be pushed beyond a certain lowering of income, humiliation etc.. Thus the transformation of consumption today has resulted in a transformation of how we maintain ourselves.

We can begin with the broad view of health. The development of civilization over the last 10,000 years has been altogether disastrous for human health. Diseases and malnutrition developed as a consequence of people being pushed closer together and of agricultural empires which extracted a surplus crop from peasants or slaves.

Still, many peasants and farmers of pre-industrial society often retained traditional health and medicinal practices. In medieval society, wise-women and midwives still maintained a body of knowledge in parallel to any church practices concerning health. So looking at either primitive or agricultural society, humans took care of their health and well-being in a relatively self-sufficient manner compared to today (though, it worth saying that Europeans were least healthy after agriculture and before civilization). This included both traditions of healing passed through mid-wives and herbalists as well as each person’s sense of connection with their environment. Today, simply not using

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your body and mind in a reasonably active and natural way is known to be a factor in many of today’s epidemics of degenerative disease (cancer is associated with toxics, Alzheimer’s associated with television¹, heart disease strongly associated with stress and inactivity, etc.).

The modern medical system began with the founding of medical schools, with the rise of doctors against mid-wives and traditional healers, and Pasteur’s discovery of germs and the germ-theory of disease. From its beginning, modern “allopathic” medicine has had a strong dimension of social control aside from whatever scientific basis it had. Unlike mid-wives, early doctors did not take cleanliness as being important to health. This dimension of social control has not ceased, and modern for-profit research can be as questionable as many earlier approaches.

There’s documentation showing allopathic offering both improvement as well as detriments to total human health. The improvements are well known – antibiotics now can prevent infections that previously would often kill people, etc.. The detriments are less well known – doctors treated scurvy as a germ-born disease long after the British navy learned to treat it with lime juice, the germ-theory of disease lead and still leads to neglecting other forms of ill-health.

The rise of modern medicine came at the same time as the rise of “public health.” Public health was a movement of doctors, planners and public officials which introduced clean water, safe food, better nutrition, adequate housing conditions and sewage disposal to modern cities. In many ways, these measures made more of an impact than the rise of medical interventions, though measuring such things are certainly difficult. Given that allopathic medicine is much less certain and less scientific than either physics or even laboratory biology, a consideration of uncertainty must be woven into this article. We won’t be trying to sort-out the exact value of the disease-model versus the preventative model. Rather, we will be

discussing medicine as a dimension of the entire transformation of life under civilization and under capitalism.

In the role of either improving or of worsening health, allopathic medicine has created a world in which people are more dependant on experts and an institutional frameworks for their health and their conception of health.

As previously mentioned, the development of modern medicine followed the entire world of Keynesianism and guaranteed survival. Hospitals the world over served as a model of the modern state, university or corporation taking care of the citizen.

In this process, what was generic "health care" was offered to people freely or relatively cheaply. It was part of various "social contracts" offered by the state. The better-off US workers of the 1950's had health insurance offered by their employer, hospitals were reasonably affordable and so-forth.

For something to become a commodity, it must be seen as outside of a person. Medical commodities range from phenomena that had previous been outside the circle of human controll, to those things which communities once managed themselves but which now are controlled by experts – a key example is doctors of obstetrics replacing mid-wives in delivering babies.

A human being is both subject and object. Capital's progress alternately use one and then the other condition of a person to commodify their reality. As object, a person is taken in an Ambulance to the hospital, not given a choice about emergency life-saving measures (whether useful or pointless). As a consumer, the person is expected to choose various medical commodities, various "health care plans" as a being expected to consider the medical plans offered by

The growth of medicine as racket is most visible at the point the medicine becomes a commodity. The 1960's and 70's saw an expanding "war on cancer" which consisted in randomly trying an immense number of compounds to see there cancer-fighting properties. This

program was hugely expensive, defined "big medicine" yet could show few gains in its long history. The program was reincarnated as the "war on AIDS" in the eighties – with no measurable improvement in public here either.

Mandating "minimum standards of care" for each particular disease forces each hospital to purchase a new machine for each medical "advance" as well as imposing control systems to assure that they adhere to these standards. The decreasing ability of many people to pay for medical insurance has caused more and more people to use the emergency room as their "medical provider of first resort" while the emergency rooms themselves increase in cost by the need for fancy gadgets. Legal maneuvering over nursing home deaths forces nursing homes to take dying residents to hospitals to allow them to die more slowly, using the latest expensive "life support system" (more accurately called *death support systems*). Hospitals speculate, build extra hospital beds and then can pass the cost onto patients. Finally, to maintain constant corporate profits, direct medical care to patient must be rationed and hospital worker's salaries attacked.

Still in larger terms, this vast money extraction complex has come as medical commodities have shown themselves to be the ideal model of modern consumption. The patient is forced to consume medical care while they themselves become the product through research performed on them and the patents thereby obtained.

The phase of the institutional of medicine taking full care of a person was a necessary part of removing various kinds of self-sufficiency (though preventative medicine certainly offered some cures beyond traditional medicine).

Now that this self-sufficiency has ended, the medical system along with the entire system, no longer guarantees any survival.

Valorizing Code

"The Information Age" in *Against Sleep And Nightmare* #4 looked at this,

the economic logic driving the expansion of information. As the information economy expand to different aspects of existence, it follows a natural cycle of surveillance, repression, falsification, and colonization – from software piracy to software cops. All code must be given a price. Many of the projects of modern capitalist development reduce to this struggle to turn activity into information and to buy, sell and control this information. From music to education to medicine, information is the universal product.

But the form of comoditized *information* is, in fact, pure obscurity. The use of code for capital is to create unquestionable commodification of each person's life. There is the code of world pricing, the tax code, software code, the coded racism around "welfare mothers" or crime, the code of universal product seals.

Nuclear energy was sold not on the basis of producing value but ultimately on the basis of tremendous money having been invested in – if it is not necessary for the world, then the world will be remade for it. The same logic is followed by computer programming, art, biotechnology or surveying. If "the map is not the territory," then the territory will be destroyed and reconstructed in the image of the map. Any code, any piece of information that people are being paid to produce and consume becomes the ultimate authority by the logic of survival.

The marketing of "genetic engineering" has followed the same logic of enforced survival. The workings or supposed workings of life must be altered to conform to the logic of control systems. A valuable product is genes for the alteration of seeds so they cannot produce further seeds. This allows seed companies to maintain their monopolies. *"We had to destroy this life to make it sellable."*

The rise of the medical industrial complex shows all of these trends rather baldly. The American health care horror is undoubtedly the model for the world, regardless of its visibly horrific qualities

– considering this system exemplifies the progress of capital as a whole. The medical cost spiral mentioned in a earlier section comes as Medicine experiences a spiral of intellectual property, both in its obsession with DNA, in the more mundane spiral of medical paper-work, law suits and insurance databases.

With Humans as subjects, the model of the medical system is the programming of the body. Naturally, it is absurd that the system can charge us seven times for care without anyone getting seven times as well (in fact, people are getting notably sicker today than twenty years ago. Note a recent Canadian study which found pharmaceutical side-effects as the fourth leading cause of death in America – ahead of homicide, suicide, and AIDSⁱⁱ. *And even this is likely an underestimate*).

We have defined a negative commodity as one that creates more misery while being sold as the relief from that misery. While a drug like heroin is the most obvious example, the entire medical industry perfects this model.

The negative commodity is not simply a matter of people being hoodwinked into various panics and rackets. It is a principle of the capitalist world. The commodity already dominate the landscape. If the process of marketing is reworked to involve buying death – whether poisonous AZT, toxic Christmas toys or equally poisonous schemes – the hapless consumer must simply keeps consuming what is in front of them. More than this, the consumer even at Disney Land ultimately accepts that their life is worthless simply by the fact that they buy their existence – their life is just things. From modern day radiation experiments to the Heaven's Gate suicides, this has meant that consumer is expected to buy their death as the ultimate product of normal life. Of course, those most willing to accept death consumerism are the ideologues of consumption and not average consumer. Here we remark that *"The world of the supermarket is the world of the concentration camp"*, in solidarity with

Giles Dave (Jean Barrot) who has been ruthlessly hounded in the French media for this insight.

Another important part of hospital marketing is reconstructing the human body in the image of capital. On the direct level, this reconstruction ranges from the materially "useful" laser surgery to dubious and dangerous cosmetic surgery. On an indirect level, this has involved imposing a mechanical and information model on human life.

The initial principle of big science marketing for medicine was that the body consisted of parts needing replacement with the hospital as the point of replacement. This was back in the 60's when transplants were seen as the wave of the future and before the dire consequences of these procedures became widely understood.

Naturally, this image has given way to the body as a repository of codes with those owning and altering the codes as the masters. Here we can see the rise of genetic engineering as the ultimate industry. It is quite useful to look at Peter Duesberg again to see how *spectacular* genetic engineering ultimately created the present landscape.

Naturally, a world which is reconstructed along the lines of the medical code makes the procession, control and generation of medical symptoms into a powerful aspect of people's over-all social existence. Codes become the repository of social meaning. Twelve-step programs have become a key social outlet for millions of people. Elaine Showalter's book *Hystories* chronicles the quest for legitimacy of believers in alien abduction, chronic fatigue syndrome, satan ritual abuse, recovered memory, gulf ware syndrome and multiple personality disorders. All of these represent individual patient's efforts to wrest control of medical coding away from doctors yet they generally remain within the medical coding of the body.

Key factor is that capitalism's dynamics move to reduce life to code whether the reduction solves problems or the reduction creates problems. We cannot say for certain the degree to which modern genetics has falsified its own results but there are many examples of substantial lying.

Chronic fatigue syndrome victims fight for their condition to be considered real in a physical sense while Alcoholics Anonymous ideologists simply seek to have their behaviors be contained within the constellation of medical diagnosis. Either way, the struggle for a worthwhile existence become subsumed in the struggle for a representation. This is a world in which continuous irritation through work, chemicals, isolation and stress makes it uncertain that anyone could be considered

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fully well (see ASAN #3 article about Chronic Fatigue and alcoholics annonymous).

Certainly, the principles of original science – proof and evidence – have been replaced with the principles of specialization and feedback. **Specialization** means the power of related specialists must be respected. Statistically verified results are blended with whatever *big lies* happen to be related. **Feedback** means that if the result can be defended with evidence and fits the financial agenda of the your masters, then it is a truth of the moment. In this order, organizations producing massively complex and effective machinery can co-exist with massive lies, illusions and fabrications.

Indeed, the greater the success of the codes, the less pressure any codes have to accept reality. Drugs more and more are "for" a condition without any comment about whether they cure a condition. "AIDS drugs" are simply "what you take" without a patient having much idea of the intended result. There are "Alzheimer's doctors" at a moment when medicine admits to not knowing any particular cure or treatment for the condition – these illustrious specialists simply have the task of sedating the patients.

The modern techno-structure has essentially abandoned the original spirit of science – moving towards the truth through observation. Its principles of feedback and specialization merely produce short-term proscriptions lacking a coherent over-view of even the system it studies. And naturally, this seamless organization of blind alleys is unchallengeable except for its total lack of historical sense. AIDS science consists of a blend of panic, simplistic generalities, incomprehensible results and moral calls. It is surely also real *contemporary* science just because it has been recycled quickly into the science curriculum and is what up-coming student believe.

But the haphazard approach actually has a unity. The spectacle must code on the principle of maximal obscurity. One technology may truly meet its amazing publicity while another may be simply the tissue of lies. This circulation of code is the purest production of spectacle.

ⁱ Friedland, R.P., et al. 2001. Patients with Alzheimer's disease have reduced activities in midlife compared with healthy control-group members. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 98(March 13):3440

ⁱⁱ Source: Jason, et al. (Lazarou et al), Incidence of Adverse Drug Reactions in Hospitalized Patients. *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*, Vol. 279. April 15, 1998, pp. 1200-05. Also Bates, David W., *Drugs and Adverse Drug Reactions: How Worried Should We Be?* *JAMA*, Vol. 279. April 15, 1998, pp. 1216-17.

Some Ideas

The present fighting within and without the Eugene anarchist scene can make us stronger **IF we learn the lessons from the recent events**. My opinions here are certainly not meant to imply that I know everything that's happening in the milieu or that I am beyond reproach personally or politically. Naturally, I too need to improve my personal relations and I invite input on this.

Still, I believe the following are really important points:

- We all know the FBI and the entire American police state are targeting the Eugene Anarchist scene. Still, we cannot prevent police provocation by a campaign to figure out exactly who is an infiltrator. Such efforts are themselves destructive. **We can, however, refuse to act-out or respond to provocations and provocative tactics.**
- We should deal with personal problems with integrity. If someone does something personally noxious or undesirable, either bring it up with them or find a reasonable third party or mediator to solve the problem. Making unanswerable or unverifiable charges, spreading rumors, organizing secretly against someone or personalizing a conflict are altogether an open invitation to police provocation. Even more so, I condemn physical attacks on activists regardless of said activists' political position. I invite everyone to also make such a statement.
- If you hear personalized charges or accusation against third parties, you do not have to simply repeat these uncritically. Even real, serious problems require a reasonable process for their solution. Any accusation against a person becomes a rumor at the point it leaves the people involved. **When YOU hear a rumor or a secret accusation, YOU too have the responsibility to decide exactly how to deal with this, rather simply swallowing and repeating it.**
- Our community cannot demand ideology purity. What I am writing here are suggestions for people that I don't expect to have complete philosophical agreement with but who are still doing good things, I suggest to you that you will not get complete philosophical agreement with me but that I am certainly willing and able to improve my behavior. I also believe many of those who have been attacked are open to changing their behavior (though they ultimately must all speak for themselves, like all of us).
- We can agree to disagree and even write leaflets against each other. This is good. But a campaign that mixes personal attacks and political differences cannot sort out either problem. Example: "Joe is a liberal and so Joe tries dominate meetings. Force Joe to give up liberalism so he won't dominate meetings." While we can demand Joe act differently, we can't demand Joe change his philosophy. We may choose not associate with Joe because of his ideas but smashing Joe's windows or leaving threatening notes addressed to Joe would be inappropriate at this point.
- The recruitment of secret factions produces a number of distortions. The greater the level of secret political maneuvering against people, the more that the bonds of trust between all of us are destroyed and the more process of paranoia increases. Consider that American Grand Jury testimony is secret to sow distrust among Grand Jury targets. Should we be using similar tactics? Secret factions have existed in the Eugene anarchist scene for a while and I believe this is one source of the present high level of mistrust between people.
While anarchists justifiably use secrecy to protect themselves from the police, the use of secrecy to exclude those you disagree with or silence those you disagree with is very manipulative. Secrecy is a weapon so be careful who you use it against.
- Each person must be able to behave correctly rather than expecting their group or clique will provide them with the correct behavior. This is one important principle of anarchism (even if I personally wouldn't label myself an anarchist). **It is especially important for us all to make our own judgments and act with integrity given that rumors and secret organizing can distort our perceptions of who stands where.** Still many who label themselves anarchists here in Eugene seem to still be willing to be ruled by peer pressure – to go along with various programs while saying "I know this seems irrational but I feel like I have to do this." That said, a number of women and men have equally stood-up against any process of peer-pressure and made their own judgments – this includes people who I might not agree with or who might not like or agree with me. This process of people making their own decisions has been the main thing that has strengthened our community at this point.
- I invite all those who have stated their desire to drop-out to reconsider. Consider the reason which caused you to become active in the movement to begin with. They are only more valid now. Painful as they are, the problems we face now are inevitable within a movement that confronts the power of the American state. One of the aims of the state is to contract the size of our movement. Once the movement contracts, those who remain are obviously easier targets and the process can continue. Instead, we should learn the lessons of the present times and continue smarter and thus stronger.

Red

The Revolutionary Unconscious

From chemical pollution to evangelism of psychosomatic disease to relentless propaganda, capitalism has reinforced the importance of the mind-body element in human activity. This article provides some metaphors for this total human activity. The progress of capital is always opening up methods that can either help capital or open a wider front of struggle. We will take ideas from Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP), hypnosis and theories of the unconscious and give an outline of how these might be put in a subversive framework.

ASAN's project has certainly involved digesting a number of perspectives, from those by revolutionaries to those created by this society's paid thinker. Critical theory has to be the opposite of the arbitrary addition of some trendy novelty. There are many appealing concepts. The Situationaists, postmodernism, chaos theory, military strategy, NLP, anthropology, quantum mechanics or other "big ideas" can all be either important tool or the opaque novelties of specialists in abstract extremism.

While not aiming at revolution, NLP is a powerful tool for understanding the dynamics of the human conscious and unconscious. Subversive activity becomes richer through looting ideas. Once a conceptual framework has become part of effective subversive activity, where exactly you get it is not the most important factor. To make tools like this your own, you must *use* them as well as explain them.

Revolutionaries should still try to trace the origins of the ideas which they pilfer (and part of this article will trace the origins of some questionable and useful ideas). Any such history is good since it shows how ideas continuously mutate into their opposite.

This will include a broad summary of some very complex ideas. Some of this discussion could be described as philosophical. But even this has a purpose – occasionally activists get stopped by not being able to give a philosophical base to their ideas.

To communicate our understanding of the complex subjects in **Against Sleep And Nightmare**, we also use the multiple levels of human communication. We don't skip the hard dull details nor do we wade through them. Instead, we paint a picture which hopefully allows an entire situation to be grasped quickly as whole by those having either the background or the imagination. This strategy is intended to allow the reader to leap quickly into imagining new ideas and new worlds.

All of this is not meant to unveil some incomprehensible result. Instead, the metaphors we will be developing here are intended to show the unity of different actions and approaches which also make sense on their own.

The dynamic approach begins in the middle so as to pull the reader into the process that is happening. Part of this article is also to give a more complete, systematic picture of our language process. So we may find ourselves first leaping to a more subtle point, then developing the same point from a more general viewpoint.

NLP And Structuralism

Towards the end of his life, Karl Marx noted how he needed to preserve the useful aspects of the classical political economy which he had previously critiqued. This wasn't because he had found these theories more valid, but because the rise of "neo-classical economics" had replaced the original theories with an approach which simply buried all the political and



problematic aspects of the original political economy.

The conditions of this society stand against people's immediate sensing of their total, continuously moving animal existence. Just as much, it stands against people's creating ideas that describe this experience of animal existence. The word "system" is engineering jargon describing a group of just about any object which interact more or less as a whole. Given the current world, this word is used extremely often. A "dynamic system" is a system that is constantly moving.

Thus, we take a similar position Marx. Now that "systems" has become omnipresent in this world, it is more the opponents of capital who have an incentive to bring these systems into view and to get some general understanding of them. This is

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the opposite approach to "postmodernism" theorists, which denies the validity of systems theory while accepting every system of today, from prisons to capital.

In the period after WWII, structuralism was a broad current oriented to using "systems theory" to recast a number of academic fields. It included Bateson, Chomsky, Norbert Wiener and many others. As well as using various mathematical approaches, the systems theory view involved moving from models where you have a single cause creating a single effect to models where each element affects the other.

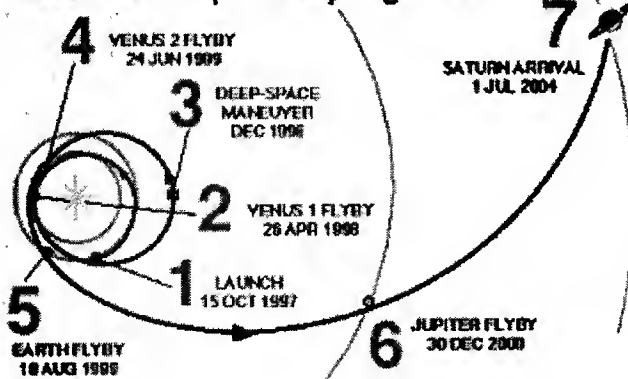
The psychological framework and self-help movement termed Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) was the product of a "radical structuralism" that involved Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson. Richard Bandler and John Grinder were followers of Gregory Bateson at the University Of California Santa Cruz. Their effort produced an effective stab toward Bateson's "Ecology Of Mind." This methodology rolled together ideas from the previously mentioned structuralists while adding a different attitude. Like most structuralism, NLP is an ahistorical formulation. The questions of the origins and meaning of the unconscious are outside its scope. Rather, it gives an interesting set of tools for utilizing language, tonality, posture, etc., to influence the structure of the relations between the human conscious and unconscious.

NLP has at least this in common with the Situation International - it was a project to bring some critical abstraction to a level where they could be used immediately and practically. It shared the attitude that instantaneous change is possible given the correct process and circumstances.

Guidance Systems

One of the simplest dynamic systems is a "feedback loop."

Cassini's Interplanetary Flight Path



A feedback loop is a system where any small change from a set, starting position causes an opposite reaction, thus moving the system back to this starting position. Feedback loops are found everywhere. A thermostat keeps an area at about the same temperature by raising the heat of the area if it gets too cool and lowering the heat if the area gets too warm.

The feedback loop is everywhere in the living and non-living worlds. Human activity in particular involves many, many feedback loops within each other. This leads to

No. 6

interesting effects. One thing that can happen in a feedback loop is that a system can become miscalibrated. We can see this in a person with Parkinson's disease. Their basic system for movement has been damaged to the point where their body goes back and forth uncontrollably when they simply make an effort to reach a particular goal.

In the early twentieth century, F.M. Alexander described how the development of civilization produced a miscalibration of the basic human balance reflexes. The miscalibration of the head and the neck balance produces a poor "use of the self" - poor posture and many of the joint-disorders around a person simply wearing out through this poor use.

Expanding our view to a "dynamic system" in general, we can look at anything from a person throwing a rock to a rocket being sent to the moon. The analogy of a space craft might seem complex and removed from us. But the space-ship analogy simply allows us to step back and notice the complexity of even a simple feedback process such as the aiming required to throw a stone. A person tossing a rock can seem so simple that the complicated processes involved maybe forgotten.

Balance and goal-getting are both natural human reflexes. They happen without a person's awareness, and on many levels, at the same time. If you see something you want down the street, you can move towards your goal while unconsciously maintaining your posture, your breathing and all those unconscious aspects of a coherent self.

Of course, a person's total activity certainly involves even more complex feedback than simply what is needed to allow a person to move or walk with elegant balance. But just considering this, shows how we should assume that many things are happening outside conscious awareness.

So to make things explicit, consider again our satellite orbiting the earth. If we want to move the satellite to the moon, what forces would we have to use to get it there? Speaking loosely, we must understand the existing orbit and fire our rockets at exactly the point when the satellite will be already aimed at the moon. We would then keep firing our rockets to maintain our aim at the moon, more and more using the moon's gravitation to take us there as well. A more complex path might actually involve circling the earth several times, each time firing rockets to make one orbit more elliptical.

Now what we will be doing is taking this idea and expanding to systems much richer than simply the orbiting planets frame. We can use this analogy for just about any change that we might want to make to a complex dynamic system. The approaches involves the following:

- 1) Understand existing dominant forces, understand your motion in terms of the forces which guide you.
- 2) Concentrate your force in such a way that it brings other forces into play. Use existing favorable forces to escape the pull of existing forces.
- 3) Once change happens, allow favorable forces to guide you to your destination, fine-tuning as necessary.

The ecology of a region, the health of a person, the growth of micro-organism, and the behavior of an economic system all have this same continuous, interactive dynamic quality. And human actions, from walking to throwing a stone to making love, have this feedback built-in. Obviously revolutionaries can take a hint in terms of organizing our activities so that we can a maximum effect in an elegant manner.

To get a little closer to these rich systems, we can generalize our "space short" analogy. We look at the "configuration space" of physics. Beginning with Descartes, mathematics and physics have defined space with coordinates. The set of "tuples" (x, y) can be used to describes all the points in two dimensional space. To create a configuration space, we take any set of values and group it to form a multi-dimensional space. This involves grouping the coordinates of each object together into tuples and considering these to be the coordinates of the points in a multidimensional space.

The movement of two objects in 3-dimensional space is can be taken as the movement of one point in 6-dimensional space by combining coordinates. Combining even more, the entire condition of a system can be seen as a single point circling in space. Even further, a configuration of say, rope suspended in space is described by infinite dimensional configuration space if we height the height of each infinitesimal section of the rope to be a single coordinate. Generally then, we can view any system as a point oscillating within a many dimensional ball. This is the underlying process we will be implicitly refering to as we speak of complex phenomenon "moving in space" or "orbiting" around a "point."

Metamodel

NLP is a system for looking at the way that language and dynamic systems interact. The NLP "meta-model" system is a useful tool for sorting language to determine whether an expression has full meaning. By attacking "deletion, distortion and generalization" within language, the meta-model reveals structural the limits of person's "model of the world."

A lot of NLP is done as standard therapy. One use of the "meta-model" comes if a client makes a statement like "I can never feel good." In actual fact, the client probably has felt good at some time in his life, if not sometime in the recent past. But the effective meaning of this statement appears when we project it down into an unconscious emotional dynamic. The client may actually generate an internal dialogue that pulls him or her into that state of "not feeling good." NLP's "meta-model" shows how by challenging the "never" in the statement "I can never feel good," a therapist can make the client's unconscious dynamic explicit and thus open to change for the patient.

The metamodel can be extended to a wide range of situations. For example, despite its claim of going beyond structuralism, postmodernism's basic structure actually can be easily deciphered with structuralist NLP (though we will give

only a simple overview here). Phrases such as "discourse", "embodied", "problematize," "situated," and so-forth exhibit a standard deleted-indirect-object formula. This deletion universalizes the phrase. We can then observe that this universalism projects unconsciously into the very specific realm of the artistic/academic trendiness. The meaning of the statement appears when an object will added to the deletion. "Embodied discourse" both means some discussion of something that involves things with bodies, implies that no one will ask what the implications of these bodies are, and prepares a particular assault on various perceived powers in the academic realm - modernists and such.

In the context of the global marketplace, we can translate just about any statement into a configuration of immediate material interests. Just as Microsoft, IBM and AOL/Time Warner extend their interests from the price of oil to the definition of freedom. Indeed, those which make no reference to material forces or deny their power simply represent the most bald interests and most complete mystifications - religions are most obvious for this.

In ASAN #5, we describe how the dynamics of race and morality unconsciously express and reinforce capitalist relations. A word that has no logical meaning can become the center for a powerful unconscious resonance. Race is an idea that has little clear meaning, yet for racists it ties together an entire edifice of nation, blood and soil. Like deconstruction, what is most powerful is what cannot be said: God, country, race and a host of other terms have extremely fuzzy and distorted meaning for people - and simultaneously have tremendous unconscious impact.

Milton Model

Language as process can be seen in the way the mind creates some effect for any sentence it hears. This is a source of much poetry. In this sense, even meaninglessness is a meaning. We take language to have infinite dimensions of logical, mathematically definable meaning. And the mind searches for meaning far beyond the literal meaning of a sentence.

NLP and dialectics agree that our concept of meaning does not spring full-blown, but instead arises out of the entire process of a person living. The ordinary idea of language looks primarily at the logical meaning of a sentence. Beyond from this, we will be expanding our idea of a dynamic system by moving in what we could call "the space of possible meanings."

The Hypnotist Milton Erickson, who was studied in depth by Bandler and Grinder, developed the "embedded command" to add hidden suggestions to his speaking. By saying "you can touch your nose" with the emphasis on "touch your nose," he would send a signal to a person's unconscious mind for the person to immediately touch their nose.

Such methods open up many questions concerning different ways that speech might be broken-up and vast number of

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complex hidden meanings that might or might not actually reach different levels of a person's unconscious. Rather than looking at the complex details of these techniques, we would look the total system such techniques are a part of. Basically, our ideas arise out of the same process as our activity. We create our ideas in the process of changing or maintaining our entire model of being.

NLP developed the "Milton model" to describe the effects of many kinds of partial communication. The metamodel and the Milton model are describe as being the opposite. Violations of the metamodel allow communication to access thought systems outside the critical, logical processing system.

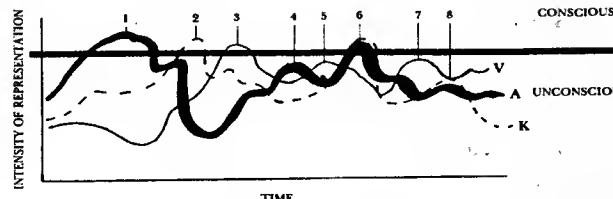
The limits of a person's communication model are like the planets which a person orbits around. Highly "deleted" words such as "democracy," "freedom" "responsibility" or "patriotism" organize a person's thoughts without the resulting logic being explicit or subject to debate. For "freedom" the metamodel could easily ask "free to do what?" If democracy is "the people ruling," the metamodel could ask "which people ruling what how?"

Beyond this undefined discourse, though, the Milton model describes the tendency of terms like democracy or responsibility to be associated with change of conscious state, with a person thinking often switching logical deduction to a feeling. States of mind can be categorized by the dominant sensory system: by auditory, visual, or kinesthetic, or by the contrast of trance-like versus rational. The process of spontaneous trance is common to many non-western cultures and this points to a greater fluidity in pre-capitalist and pre-civilized societies. Still, considering that trance states are presently associated with buying frenzies or television, we can't see trance as automatically friend or foe. Instead, following NLP, will encompass trance within our description of dynamic human activity.

Re-calibrating

The situation described by F.M. Alexander, of a civilized person holding their body involves the conscious mind, goal-seeking over-riding the natural balance processes and producing a habitually held, fixed posture.

Ironically, a person holding their body in a rigid, down position thus often believes that they are "hold themselves up" or "holding themselves straight." Telling someone to hold themselves straight thus often result in a person pulling their head and neck down and back. Alexander evolved the verbal directions "free your neck, allow your head to move forward and up, allow your back to lengthen and widen, allow you back and neck to move back, and allow knees to move out and away from your body" as an antidote for a person's usual situation of their intentions getting in the way of their movement.



Within this society, the range of personal miscalibrations is huge. It ranges from awkward postures to sexual misery and confusion to fear and uncertainty about a person's position in society and beyond.

Many miscalibrations fall into the problems described by Alexander. These involve a person seeing themselves as a fix, rigid object to be moved or manipulated according to some rational conception. Just as much, miscalibrations often form fixed ideas in the conscious mind which do not follow a person's natural dynamic process of total change.

Marx described "Bourgeois Ideology" as a narrative which sees all activity as essentially the product of a conscious narrative. The development of the United States is described as being based on "the development of the ideal of freedom." This ideology can be seen as a product of the fixated internal processes, the miscalibration, which citizens under capitalism experience. Thus, we can describe "miscalibration" as calibration to capitalism.

Change

When we talk about utilizing these ideas to inspire actions for creating a new way of living, we describe both situations which offer someone people a chance to undo their manifest miscalibration as well as situations which offer people a chance to change their ideas.

Both approaches are important yet neither can be compared to the other. We will be imagining change in terms of people's total dynamic rather than simply imposing a set of new ideas.

Showing the meaninglessness of key phrases today is one useful tactic. Still, revolutionaries call for "authentic life" as contrasted to the "impoverished existence of supermarket society." But one can easily tag deletions and generalizations in this statement by asking "Authentic in what way? False in what way? Do you mean ALL society is the society of the supermarket?" The expression is certainly incomplete, but we would use it because it points the way towards a different dynamic of existence.

Moreover, the term "authentic" may be incomplete but it does not conceal an entirely different dynamic in the

way that a term like race, nation, or God conceals hidden interests. All of these are incompletely specified. But since much language is incomplete, we need to also look at the total social dynamic to see what terms are useful for us to use.

This appears when we look at the complete dynamics of how meaning is created. Physicist speak of "emergent properties". These are properties that appear out of the operations of a system on itself. To see the system as it is, emergent properties are very useful. Invariants are an important emergent property - invariants are values that stay the same as a system changes.

When a person makes a statement, their full behavior goes into creating a stream of information. A person stands closer or further away, speaks louder or more softly etc.. The process of speaking is unconsciously balanced with processing of breathing, and so-forth. And the listener's unconscious impulses are constantly readjusting themselves. This readjustment may or may not move it in the direction of speaker's explicit message.

Now the feedback processes of the unconscious can be modeled as our finite dimensional configuration space (see above). Thus our logical language **projects** down to become a force affecting a particular complex feedback system. Roughly, we can imagine speech having an effect determined by the existing forces in a person's mind. Moreover, since a person's unconscious is strongly connected with that of those around them, language can have an effect based on total social forces.

We can look at how the structure of an expression determines the force this expression exerts on the total unconscious dynamic. Some complex descriptions come from NLP but many things are fairly obvious given this framework.

NLP regards beliefs as being formulated and re-formulated continuously. It is not continuity of beliefs that results in the continuity of the world. Rather, it is the continuity of the world that results in the continuity of beliefs. Although this isn't the impression of people today, a person's whole being is constantly orbiting within the space of language and meaning.

NLP models communication as happening simultaneously on multiple logical levels. And each level involves a feedback loop which implicitly references objects further outside the immediate circle of communication.

Now understanding the total system of conscious-unconscious communication generates a number of techniques to enhance a "full-spectrum" communication process (embedded commands and such). But the actual dynamic of each person's conscious and unconscious is what allows a total communication to successful or not.

The energy of planets is determined by a complex formula involving their location and motion. But it is also simple and useful because it stays the same over time (except with outside intervention). The Marxian categories of "mode of production" or "relations of production" show invariant of societies under the transformation of rulers or flavors of ideologies. Chomsky's theory of language is based on transformations of sentences which preserve the meanings of those sentences.

Consider again the term "impoverished existence." By streamlining and minimizing the alienated labor going into each product, capital makes certain that each commodity only minimally satisfies the need for which the consumer buy it. Thus impoverishment is roughly a quality that remains constant through-out the entirety of this society.

In the case of the term "authentic life," we see the term as part a different dynamic from the dynamic of the present

system. The idea of a "more real" existence is intended to tune-into an existing dynamic of negating this society of endless calculation and impoverishment.

Stepping Beyond - Belief Change Dynamics

If deleted phrases are a force which maintains a person's connection with the present system, what happens when a person's position is undermined?

Saying "The society of the supermarket is the society of the death camp" provokes an immediate reaction. Certainly, there is a logic behind this reaction. But it also a matter of person's immediate unconscious reaction to an image. Many people have had the experience of changing their beliefs on a way that is beyond words. This includes religious experiences, communing with nature, and falling in love.

"Beyond words" certainly suggests directly experiencing a feedback system. Our "moon shot" analogy can illuminate this kind of experience. A belief or value can be seen as a stable point within a person's mind. So normally a person's thoughts "orbit" around their usual values - they move away from the value and then back towards it. If some event or some image moves the person's thinking far enough away from their starting point, they may suddenly find their thinking settling into a completely different routine.

On one hand, a person's activity may be motivated by particular beliefs or values. At the highest logical level, these ideas are usually stated in a deleted fashion. The power of these conscious values comes from unconscious forces.

When a person goes outside of a stable point, they reach a place where systems of anticipation breakdown. The process of a person moving from one stable state to another often involves stepping back from the reasons a person's conscious generates for acting and instead allowing the unconscious to test the feelings generated by the possibility of new behavior.

Congruence

A Berkeley Food Not Bomb activist recounted his experiences serving in Oakland, CA. Paraphrasing him, "When Food Not Bombs first began, we would serve food a little bit in Oakland. When we did, people would ask who we were and why were serving there. As white activists, serving in a black area, we had no real answer for who we were and so felt uncomfortable. We eventually left. Later, once we became comfortable serving People's Park, we began serving again in Oakland. At that point, we could simply saying 'we're a bunch of freaks from Berkeley.' At this point, having an idea who we were, people could accept us."

To mobilizes forces to create fundamental change we must use both conscious and unconscious resources. It is common for conscious revolutionaries to retain an unconscious attachment to the operations of this system. Just as much, it is common for folks who are acting in an unconsciously revolutionary way to retain a conscious attachment to this society.

Congruence is an NLP term describing a person's conscious and unconscious functioning harmoniously together. The many internal process of a person generate a communication which is either **congruent** (supports the explicit message) or **incongruent** (contradicts

The Adventures Of ...

The more he gives up, the further Militant Man gets in "the scene"

...Militant Man!



He thinks fighting exploitation means giving up desires!

But Militant man is still stung by the misery of everyday life.



Everyone can feel a militant is only more alienated when he is loudly professing his surrender of all of his "privilege."

So Militant Man Must Give Up More!



What is a militant? What is the left? Leftists altogether could be defined as the international association of specialists in oppression. From racism to sexism to agism to class-oppression to lookism to homophobia and so-forth, leftists study, quantify and aspire to own each different sort of oppression. A racial nationalist who presents him or herself as the only authority on the feelings, ideas and aspirations of black or hispanic people is one classic example of a leftist. A feminist academic who presents her or himself as the only authority on the feelings, ideas or aspirations of women also a classic leftist.

As **specialists** in oppression, leftists act by noticing, intensifying and **managing** feelings of powerlessness. From welfare workers, to unionists to national liberation armies, leftists seek to establish themselves as the sole representative of one or another type of oppression. They then sell their control of this oppression to the highest bidder. Professed feminists work in the child-protection-service agencies which terrorize poor families by stealing their children.

The leftist militant gets their need for constant action from their cultivation of guilt. This need for action and cultivation of guilt soon over-whelms any consciousness of a larger purpose for their action. Soon, the domination of leftism, of guilt politics, becomes more important than any positive outcome of their activity.

Since the leftist specializes in particular oppressions, their main tactic is spreading an awareness of the feelings of oppression. From Christian twelve step programs to Maoist "Criticism self-criticism sessions," leftists cultivate a feeling of powerlessness to increase their influence. Because of this, the leftist work to increase dishonesty, fear and irrationalism. Secret or controlled meetings, and a controlled and stilted language are a natural way for leftists to impose their ideology. The gulags of Soviet "communism" are a good model of a fully developed leftism.

For the abolition of capitalism, militantism and moralism.

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itself). To claim personal strength in a weak voice contradicts the claim of strength. A speaking voice that validates its conscious message is a powerful tool for taking people towards the speaker's viewpoint.

Communication in any medium can be congruent or incongruent. For example, it may be incongruent to speak through the representatives of capitalism while claiming you oppose capitalism. On the other hand, those who can act shamelessly, those who make no apologies for who they are, are at the point of congruence (though whether they are congruently revolutionaries is another matter).

Those using the system against itself can use "anti-media sound-bytes" (what could be called anti-art, when art was a serious proposition). This can include anything from video parodies of cheap puppets hitting each other to altered cartoons. These are sound-bytes which serve to undermine the legitimacy of the media-form itself. Since the media is part of the whole system, you can only congruently speak of the whole system by illustrating that you understand the conditions of the discussion. This means only by pacing ongoing reality. Also, this is a result of the concept "system" itself being generating by our dynamic perception rather than by logical argument. Workers can see capitalism as a system when they revolt and their bosses respond to them.

Challenging people and interrupting expectation is important for several reasons. It casts you as someone who won't put up with BS and thus casts you as someone worthwhile. It is aimed to inspire folks to begin challenging things about their lives as well. The aim of revolutionaries isn't simply to get people to swallow whole an idea, but to get people to begin to take more power over their entire lives. Being challenged by someone can inspire action even if the person challenged doesn't immediately accept the intellectual framework put forward. Still, using challenges that present a high-level perspective of the system can be an important part of the whole system.

Anti-media is at least as old as the Dadaists. The effectiveness of self-critiquing media is so power that it is a large part of mainstream media itself - from Monty Python to advertising. But those fundamentally opposed to this system have the most potential to do this fully, that is congruently.

The Uses Of A Vision

A common problem among activists is finding the balance of tactics. On the one hand, pacifists makes a fetish of non-violence. On the other hand, those who reject pacifism can code a fetish of violence into a term like "armed struggle". Those who focus on dictatorial nations make a fetish of direct democracy and consensus. Those who see the idiocy and paralysis of consensus make a fetish of determined action by militants. This list could go on endlessly. It shows the weakness of focusing on tactics.

When you try to sort through an action tactic by tactic, one has trouble finding points of balance. If instead you let yourself focus on the final result, then the balance of tactics can open effortlessly. And balance is key in dealing with the spectacle.

A part of the structure of maintaining or disrupting stable states is understanding how these involve anticipation. Many techniques do no need clever calculation. Instead they involve imagining the condition which you wish to inspire, going into that state and inviting others to follow.

Again using the space-shot analogy, the unconscious can sense the existence of potential stable "orbits". An empowered collective may not yet exist but a potential state which we can leap or aim for.

Given this, the vision of an empower community is a more powerful force than a series of improvements negotiated from the perspective of the present order. Effective language involves

imagining a new world. Communist tactics involve projecting our imagination of a new society so as to allow people to leap into this new stable state.

To do this congruently, we must advocate and take actions which have the potential to change the fundamental dynamic of this society. The process then is a sequence of double-or-nothing actions, each of which can go further but which are seldom guaranteed to go further - a wildcat strike, an occupation of a street or an act of vandalism all have the potential for igniting further action.

Acts that involve increasing collective power can be a part of such tactics. Making a strike committee reflect the collective will of strikers is an important tactic and brings one closer to an entire society which reflects the will of the dispossessed. Thus increasing democracy through things like worker's councils can be important at a critical moment.

But this is entirely based on looking at the exact situation. In a situation of mass takeovers, say France in May of 68, committee democracy might bring total collective control closer. But this doesn't mean it's a generically "good tactic" which can be applied to any situation. Union-created "Workers Councils" intended merely to increase the productivity of an average factory worker quite likely are something for workers to fight against.

Our general method moves from the position of the individual dispossessed person and the choices they face to the conditions of a collectivity and the choices of the collectivity. Thus tactics which create a potential collectivity can be incredibly strong. An example is when an instance of property damage changes the concept of development from being thought of as a process beyond collective control to one which might be under collective control. Although this an individual act, it creates an understanding the collective power is possible and thus creates a different idea of collective power.

This is also dialectics. Rather than imagine some separate system, you imagine that you are of the system. Rather than imposing a blueprint, you attune to and aim existing forces in a way that allows the embryo of the new world to grow to maturity.

Conclusion - Dialectics

All of the really cool tools we mention are useful for recapturing the action of informal subversion. Marx intended his materialist framework to elucidate the existing activity of communist workers. NLP describes how language touches a person's total process (rather just their rational logic). If we look at this with radical eyes, we will see that this analysis also rediscovers how the language of informal existence already does this. The question "how's it going?" is beautiful for expressing life as a continuous living process rather than a dead sequence of choices.

We are using sequential language to describe a system whose elements interact simultaneously. Hegel is notable for confronting this dilemma. Hegel's philosophy could be described as a narrative describing a natural progression of ideas. Rather than a single guiding idea starting and ending a discussion, the "dialectic" results in one idea developing organically from another.

Marx reversed this by looking at the way a material world worked. Marx maintained Hegel's conception that you could look at each stage of historical development as an answer to the question asked by the previous stage but material processes as the askers and answerers of the questions.

None of these methods replace political economy. Instead, they may give insights into exactly when and how eruptions beyond capitalist economics may happen. Political economy describes the stable points of our system and thus is the most reliable guide.

Work
got you
stressed
out?



(Feel like you're ready to crack?)

Don't ~~FREAK~~ out... **ALONE**

WAIT till we're **ALL** ready to go!



For a world without bosses, money,
wage slavery or commodity production

**Build
MASS
ACTION**



to **DESTROY** market relations
For a community of mass power